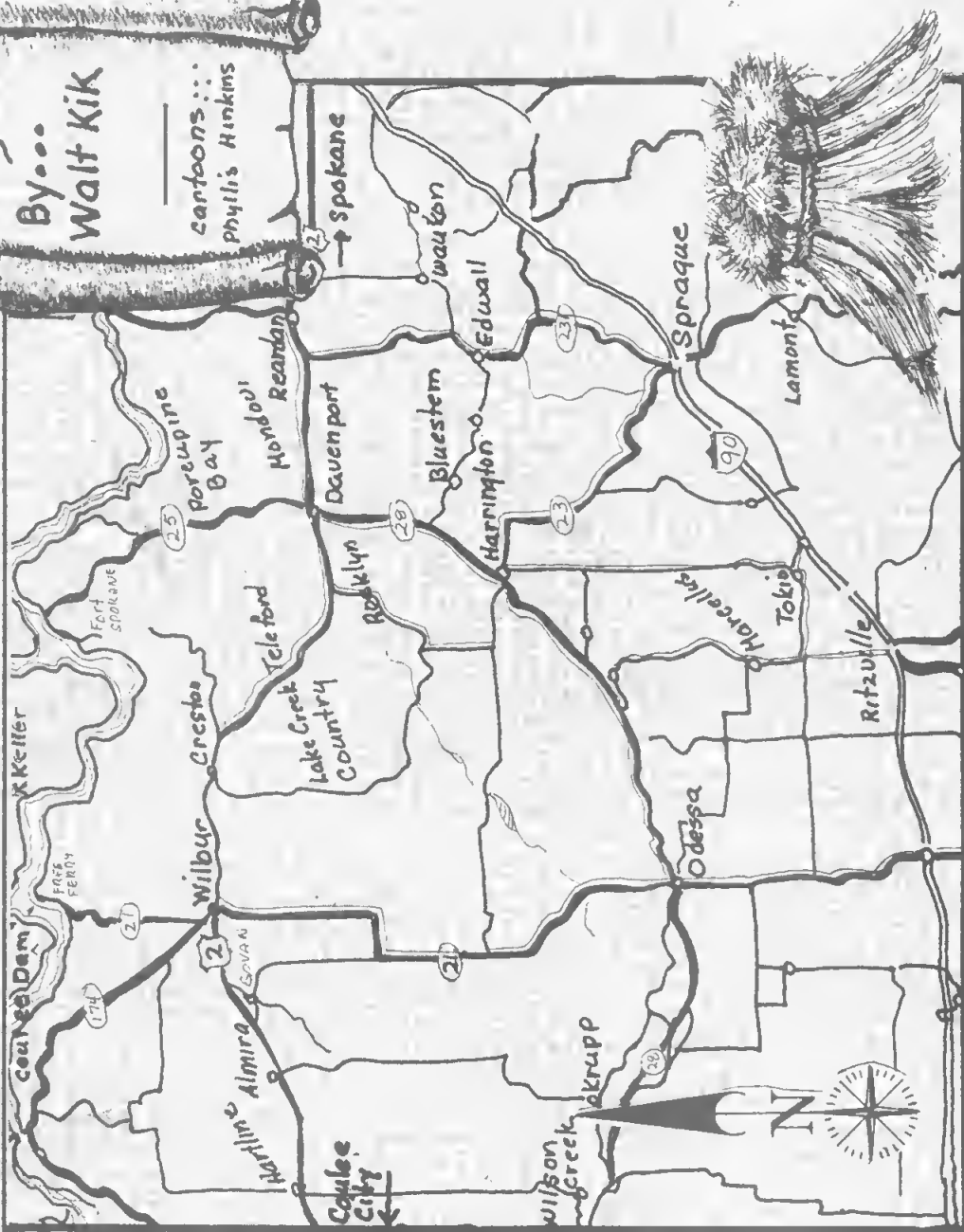


Kik-Back Country

By...
Walt Kik

Cartoons...
Phyllis Hinkins



— FORWARD —

I never had any idea that I could have kept plugging along for over 12 years, writing about stuff and things. My, how time flies! It's been four years since Kik-Backs was put together. Seems like events, past and present, keep popping up in my surroundings.

The human mind, when it's all-together holds an amazing amount of memories. Yet my mind has some genetic faults. Short-term memory allows me to dial a number that I find in the telephone book, then forget the number at the first "Hello."

In my spare time, I simply write as a hobby. During my teen-age years, I started keeping a diary of my rather discontented life in Southern California. It served as a pacifier during those years that I longed to return to the land of my birthplace.

In 1939, Sugar took over the job of keeping a diary. All this stored up material was a help for some of my stories. So were all the records, clippings and notes that I have laying around in a careless manner.

Big thanks goes to Phyllis Hinkins for her artistic ability that adds a visual picture to some of my stories. Appreciation goes to Frank Stedman for taking on the job of publishing this book. I have given Sugar some extra hugs (the affectionate kind) for being my dictionary, and proof reader. My final thanks to you good readers for all your response, both the good and the not so good. Especially on the touchy subjects. You made my amateur writings a challenge.



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Christmas Time Once Again

Now days Christmas seems to be the time for exchanging a lot of things you can't afford for a lot of things you don't want. It should be the way we spend Christmas that is more important than how much. Paying \$25 for a Christmas tree causes you to get trimmed more than the tree.

Guess I sound like old Scrooge. Sugar takes care of all this present stuff and does give me equal credit when the Christmas tags are pasted on. You can always make a good fellow out of yourself by getting something meaningful for that mate of yours. If the washing machine is up for replacement, Christmas time is the right time to bring home a brand new washer. If you love a good television, let Christmas be an excuse to give yourself a Christmas present by getting a bigger TV, with all those speakers so sound can enter your ears, stereo like. Also throughout the holiday season, there are lots of organizations of choice that can use a helping hand by slipping them a few bucks.

Has the Christmas holiday changed over the years? Uh-huh, Christmas at one time was so simple that one Santa Claus could work the whole town. Another thing, little kids are getting smarter and it's harder to fool them. Seeing more than one of these hefty red faced guys with premature white beards can turn little ones off. However, the new breed of multi-Santas are serving a more realistic role by sort of portraying the spirit of Christmas. After all,

it's about time that the budding generation gets to know who is spending all the dough to make them happy.

I had read in the Sunday paper that kids have 78% more toys than they use. [was every home canvassed?] It went on to say that with fewer things, the season has more of a chance for joy. It's not a season to be burdened."

Surplus toys never became a problem until the last couple of generations. The homemade and store bought rag dolls of days gone by took a long time to revolve into the highly commercialized cabbage patch craze. Cast iron shaped toys, heavy enough to be used as weapons, were molded out. One bounced off my head when a playmate turned into a sore head. Before plastic was invented, light weight inflammable celuloid dolls were also popular, but not very durable, and were always in danger of setting the house on fire. Especially when little girls would park their dolls alongside of the heating stove as a place to bed them down.

By using our imagination during the rag and celuloid days, we pre-space age kids enjoyed what toys we had. In our home, the high light of each beddy time during Christmas week was when the folks lit candles on the tree for about 10 minutes. It made sister and me happy. The sight of small candle flames dancing on the tree and the smell of pine and burning wax was an event we long remembered.

Remembering Santa Claus

We now have a much better Santa Claus than when I was a kid. What glimpses I've seen of him lately, I notice that he has slimmed down considerably, and can fit into his sled much better, leaving more room for toys. After all, he had seventy-one years to improve on himself since I first heard of him. All during my Santa Claus years, I really never saw him in person. My mother was the only family member that ever met him. He gave her a post card picture of himself. Except for being heavier, he doesn't look any older than he did then.

Thinking back to those early day wild sleigh rides that Santa took through our territory brought back some disappointing memories of that old guy. Sure, he usually did leave lots of toys, but at times he was a discriminating old geezer. He favored those that had everything, and then turned tightwad with little ones that barely had any toys at all.

I've forgotten the year, but it must have been 1913 or 1914, when Santa left one ornery brat sacks of toys. This kid already had toys stacked in nearly every corner of the house that his parents dumped on him throughout the year.

That same Christmas eve, after leaving the Rocklyn district, old Santa went sailing right by a new settler's home that held two kids and a baby. That's right, he never left a darn thing! All those two walkable sisters had to play with was some empty sewing spools, and a couple of rag dolls with their stuffings hanging out.

I shouldn't complain about Santa when he was in his learning years, but it's hard not to. He did come to our house two different Christmas Eves to leave presents, but only took time out to visit with my mother. On Christmas Eve Santa somehow told mother ahead of time, to get her kids out of the house when it got dark. He didn't want to be bothered having little ones under his feet while he was busy unloading.

Dad then had the chore of entertaining sister and me out in the barn while he was milking old bossy cow. Dad told us it might be possible to see Santa's sled and reindeer if we would look through the barn cracks. Naturally every hole and crack of proper height was used for looking purposes with no success.

When old bossy got drained of her milk, dad pushed the barn door open, and our feet got us to the house at once. Mom didn't have time to get all the tree trimmings back on the tree that were knocked off during that rough ride in Santa's sleigh. To sis and me, the tree was a beautiful sight, with all those toys waiting to be played with. Santa brought Ethel her first doll, Suzanne. She is over 70 years old this Christmas eve. Suzanne is now getting too fragile for Ethel's descendants to play with.

I guess it was natural that we soon forgot about getting excited over what Santa would bring us. In fact, when reaching school age, we didn't give a darn anymore about Santa. After kicking him out of our lives, we were on our own. It was more fun dealing directly with



our parents, and was less disappointing.

When the cold winter nights began to set in, and supper dishes were taken off the table, the Sears catalog got pulled off the overloaded center table, and carried to where the main source of light was. As the pages were turned to our favorite markings of the playthings that would later be sent for, drooling would begin. Sometimes just looking at the pictures of the toy we wanted was rewarding enough to last us for part of the evening.

Finally before bedtime a black slab of slate would get drug out for about the 300th time. Drawing was then

done with a squeaky slate pencil. With each repetition, the drawing was enhanced a bit more. Tinker toys, with a little imagination was an exciting toy to play with during my toy venture days.

Once again Christmas time is here. It's interesting to go over our past childhood Christmases. Every event was brand new to us then. We have a lot to be thankful for, as most of us will soon complete another year. We Christmas children of the past are now playing the roles of parents, grandparents, or the childless ones. It's how we found ourselves cast in life.

Little David

After attending a series of Christmas church programs and services one soon begins to realize that half of our past and present activities are religiously oriented. Like any organization or business, a lot of religious folk with good intentions have been taken in by the very persons they thought they were helping.

A few weeks before Christmas, nearly 38 years ago, a con-man hit Davenport with his son, Little David, the miracle child. A fundamental church with good intentions, sponsored this child wonder that was supposed to be filled with the gift of delivering powerful sermons.

The setting was ideal. Everyone was in a good pre-holiday spirit. Peace on earth, good will toward men, seemed to have been in practice at that time. It didn't take long that night to pack the church. It was kind of cute to see Little David sitting on the pulpit chair with his feet dangling half way to the floor.

Little David's dad started the program off by telling

the congregation that his 'power-packed' boy wanted to be with his mother during Christmas. But they didn't have any dough to make it back to mama's house.

The local pastor was stuck with this gimic before the show got started. He had to stand up and act like an auctioneer by asking the crowd, 'Who will give the first \$50 so Little David can spend a joyful Christmas with his mother?' When the requested amount was lowered to a respectful figure, contributions started to roll in.

When the donations were safely tucked away, the 'boy wonder' went through his well schooled antics. He was like a wound up robot, jumping up and down uttering religious statements. With a fist poking high in the air, he made himself momentarily invisible when he walked from side to side of the pulpit. It was such an act, I couldn't resist recording it on movie film.

When Little David got wound down, a lot of young folks went up to the altar and received a Bible marker.

Later, Little David's daddy tried to collect five bucks each for the cardboard markers.

A few weeks after the father and son team left Davenport, Little David must have longed to go back to a normal little boy's life. I guess it was no fun seeing papa

pocket all that dough. So he ran away when his dad wasn't looking. David found his way back to his grandparent's place. Later when papa came back to pick up his flesh and blood meal ticket, the law moved in and arrested him on charges of child abuse:

Ten Days Before Christmas

Ten days before Christmas, in the dark of the night, a stranger on foot came to our house to seek shelter for the night. No, it was not a pregnant wife like the Christmas story of old, but a man seeking a place to rest his weary body. This stranger was from Newark, Delaware. He was told by a teacher in Spokane that I'd be interested in his commitment to health. We were glad that this rare specimen chose our place for one of his rest stops.

Naturally an explanation was in order for him to clarify the air. Especially since he arrived on foot from Spokane in the middle of a cold wintery night. After learning that he turned his body over to medical science, I decided to tape his story. He said he gets by on five hours of sleep, so we didn't mind keeping him up way past beddy time.

Here is the gist of the experimental way that this guy has been living for the last two years: Thirty-seven year old Rob Sweetgall from Delaware spent 12 years behind a desk, making lots of money as a Chemical Engineer for DuPont Company. As time passed, he began noticing it was getting harder to see his belt buckle when he looked down. His growing well-shaped pot belly was blocking the view. Then a large proportion of his family began keeling over from heart attacks. Realizing he would soon be reaching middle age, with a family risk factor, Rob junked his job.

After working out a medical and vascular program, Rob was able to find several good sponsors, including DuPont. They all fulfilled his dreams by putting him on the road as a perpetual walking guinea pig.

So from October 1982 to July 1983, Rob had to run and walk through 37 states, a total of 10,608 miles, and talked to about 100,000 youngsters on the importance of physical activity, and how to stay off the bad stuff by putting good stuff in their stomachs. Mr. Sweetgall rang a bell when he said his diet includes lots of peanut butter, and no red meats. He throws egg yolks over the fence like I do when I want to down an egg.

This fall, Rob got his sponsors to enlarge their testing on him. After being interviewed by Jane Pauley on the Today Show, he put his feet to work again. This time his contract called for propelling himself through 50 states in 50 weeks, including shuttles to Alaska and Hawaii. When he walked into our house, he had knocked off 3,070 miles from his scheduled 11,600 mile trek that will get him into Manhattan, New York on September 5th. It's a fast long walk for the health of it.

Even though I'm a health nut, it seems like what Rob is doing is more than is needed to stay alive. Course it's all done for vascular study that could benefit all of us. I still think if a person runs four or five miles twice a week, and adds a weekly swim of a mile or two, it's enough to make you feel all shiny and new. Some feel more

comfortable doing much less, fine - do what you can. the benefits are the same.

Energy levels vary in different people. When Mr. Sweetgall came clobbering in from his spurt from Spokane, he took his shoes off, and plunged his naked feet into a snow drift a couple of times for cooling off purposes. His body burns food rapidly, so he eats ten times a day in light doses. It takes 4,500 calories a day to run his fuel efficient body. He wears out a pair of shoes in about a million footsteps or 16 days. Twenty pairs of Rockport shoes are expressed across the county to meet him at designated post offices. Rob averages 45 miles a day. He is truly a man with a mission.

His five pound fanny pack is a magician's wonder. Out pops some foot powder and ointments, waterproof socks, road maps, schedules of all the towns, with dates where he is to speak, record sheets for keeping track of every parcel of food that passes his lips, camera and slides that he uses for lectures. Also a normal size toothbrush.

Rob is sent back to his sponsors by plane every few weeks. His body is then run through the laboratories. He is then dumped back to where his feet made their last tracks. The sponsors are spending \$100,000 on this guy.

After Sugar made him a stack of peanut butter sandwiches to last him to Wilbur, Rob Sweetgall then disappeared into the fog and snow. Plans were made to meet Rob Tuesday morning outside of Coulee City somewhere for a grandstand walk with him into Waterville, and to take in his scheduled speaking engagement. He called up that stormy, stormy morning, and told us the road was closed to Waterville, but to come anyway and try to detour. Having no desire to buck such odds and to become a statistic, we declined.



Rob Sweetgall, after a good night sleep and 25 states of walking left to do.

New Year's Eve

A new year will soon get started in the middle of a rough winter. "The frozen soil is in no enduring danger, and the heavy death upon the earth is no lasting peril," so said Kenneth Patten, while he was fooling around waiting for spring to come. It won't be long now for the sun to start climbing the sky, and darkness will again be pushed back a little each day. The buttercups and the green grass will be waiting patiently to make their appearance.

Whether you will be helping to get this new year on the road with some sort of ritual is a matter of choice. 1987 will come on schedule, even if you don't celebrate its grand entrance.

In the early days it wasn't possible to jump into a car, and go tearing off to some noisy night spot, just to see the new year come in. When a lot of old settlers got sleepy on New Years Eve, they just blew out the light and went to bed.

There were some that did what my dad used to do. He saw to it that he had some shotgun shells left over from shooting jack rabbits so he could shoot the old year out and shoot the new year in.

The habit of staying up until midnight didn't exist for dad in those days. When 10 o'clock arrived on New Year's Eve, he would drop off to dream land in his reading rocker. Us kids had the fun of staying out of bed real late, so we could wake dad up before midnight.

Upon waking, an excited look crossed dad's face as he jumped up and grabbed the old shotgun on his way to the kitchen door. About a minute before the New Year, we would holler at dad to shoot out the old year. He had roughly a minute to reload the gun so he could blast in the new year.

When our vocal chords finished welcoming in the new year, the party telephone line began ringing. Neighbors would shout to each other, "Happy New Year!" Either you would try to ring another neighbor, or they would beat you to it. Usually it wound up with three or four different families visiting happy like at the same time.



Later in life some of us young folks got tired of waiting for the new year to come in at home, so we went out with friends to celebrate. Later we gave New Year Eve parties which were a lot of fun. Local churches also became involved, and put on some church approved party games. Just before the old year clunked out, the party attending minister acting as the chaperone would ask the Almighty for guidance through the coming new year. The Rocklyn country church still carries on this traditional way of accepting the new year.

New year partying with our Spokane friends has been very enjoyable for Sugar and me. Attending those new year celebrations is becoming a little scarcer for us. Seems like bad weather and drinking drivers is sort of taking the fun out of it all. We may soon revert back to the days of blasting in the new year with the old shotgun.

Sugar and I are thankful for a lot of things this past year. Like being alive for one thing. Have a happy and safe new year!

Income Tax Time

Well, it's income tax time again. Maybe a little early for such thoughts, but the sooner the figuring part is taken care of, the more time there will be for relaxing. I used to pay up the first week in January. Now since money is becoming expensive, it's worth a lot to the banks, and yourself as user, so it's best to wait a spell before digging up.

Years ago, a lot of us older ones got by much cheaper when it came to paying taxes than this generation does. I never heard of income tax until I was three-fourths grown up. The winter of 1920 was when Uncle Mike had to pay money to the government, and he sort of took pride in telling dad that he was making too much money.

I farmed for 18 years without the blessing of dealing with the revenue department. Golly, I never did know if I had ever beaten the government out of any money or

not. It was just luck during my tax free days that the government didn't send anyone out to my place. The only records I ever kept on the wall calendar was the number of eggs gathered each day, and later when I got married, the amount of money that was missing when Sugar needed things.

Then in 1945, I was told I'd better file an income tax return or I could get into trouble. After following good advice by filling out a tax return, I got into trouble anyway.

All my past tax problems came back to me vividly last summer while attending the annual warehouse dinner in Odessa. There sat my old favorite tax collector, Ira Schuster, who I hadn't seen in 40 years. Upon visiting with him, I found out that he was able to survive his job, and now the years have put him into retirement.

When the war with the Germans and the Japanese was over, Mr. Schuster, and my life went through a

change. Ira got a job collecting taxes, and I got started paying them. Schuster the collector, haunted a lot of us farmers by driving into our yards. He always carried a bag full of printed stuff that usually proved that we didn't fork over enough dough.

He was a man that got down to business before he sat down. After identifying himself to me, Schuster made it known that I sold 100 acres of farm land in 1945 that I didn't report in my tax returns. I told him I didn't know I had to. He made it known in no uncertain terms that all profits from sales are taxable. Schuster asked me quickly what I paid for the land. I told him I got the land for \$15 an acre when times were very tough. A surprised look came across his face. Then Ira wanted to know what I sold the 100 acres for. When I told him I sold it for the same price I gave for it, a bigger look of surprise came over his face. "You mean to tell me that you sold 100 acres of farm land for \$1,500?" was his question. It was verified by a nod.

Returnable Land

The following week, while visiting casual like with a young reader of the Times, he asked, "How come you didn't ask more than \$15 an acre for that land you wrote about. Did someone put a curse on those acres?" then he added a happy, "Haw haw."

In fact, he could be right. That is if you are a believer in curses. The land's history does supply fuel for the superstitious ones. Everytime this land was sold, buyers didn't keep it very long, and the owners would get it back.

This questionable 100 acres was part of a 480 acre put-together farm. It was the only squared up piece of farmable land in this body of volcanic disarray. The rest of the space consists of rocks, and jig-saw patches of soil.

For centuries this land didn't do anything but grow bunchgrass and rock roses. Meanwhile, back in Wisconsin, two half brothers, Homer Jones and Bill Nelson, married two sisters, Ruby and Mary. These two couples wanted to start married life way out here in Lincoln county, so they headed for Rocklyn.

Jones and Nelson corresponded with three lazy homesteaders, who only broke enough ground to grow potatoes. One of them owned this 100 acres. They all wanted to sell out to anyone that would slip them the right amount of money.

The Joneses and Nelsons complied. When the summer of 1909 arrived, they built themselves a rather cozy love nest. A dining room and kitchen downstairs and two bedrooms upstairs. That way the two couples didn't have to go very far to visit with each other.

These adventurous couples brought with them the desire to start up a dairy herd of cows. So they sent to Wisconsin for the grass seed of their choice, and planted the stuff discriminately on this 100 acres, as well as the adjoining pot holes. But the grass seed was loaded with quack grass. The next year, the grass took on a sickly look, and the quack grass stayed healthy.

Soon the two sisters got homesick for Wisconsin,

The land sale was an embarrassment to one's intelligence. Only blockheads sold land for that price. However, what I did saved me from paying extra income tax. Mr. Schuster didn't want to believe me, so I had to show him a half paid contract I had with my neighbor.

Since I won the first round, it was Ira's duty to try and find something else that could be wrong with my tax refund. He flipped some papers over a couple of times 'til he came to a spot where I sold some of my own wheat to myself that was used to feed our chickens. Schuster said I couldn't do that. He was right, so I had to hand him \$36 before he left.

For over a year while shaking down farmers that made out questionable returns, Schuster would stop in for a supply of fresh eggs, and sometimes picked up a couple of roosters for eating purposes. After all these years, it was nice to see him again and meet his wife.

and their husbands got sick looking at all that quack grass. In those days, there was no knowledge on how to get rid of quack grass, except pray for a seven year drought.

So Jones and Nelson rounded up a retired minister, Rev. Hawks, who took the farm off their hands temporarily. But they sold their put-together farm as having grade one wheat land on it. When preacher Hawks saw the growing wheat drying up on the thin spots, and the rest of the crop being choked out by that evil quack grass, he sued for his money back.

To help the Wisconsin bound folks out, neighbor Bill Chapel testified that the 100 acres in particular was number one land and the quack grass would disappear if they seeded wheat every year. The jury saw different, so the Reverend got his saved-up preaching dough back.

Anxious to get back to Wisconsin, the Jones' and the Nelsons gave bachelor Frank Marcellus a crack at the land at much reduced payments. Frank wore out his mules before he could wear out the quack grass. So he dumped the place back to Jones and Nelson, who by now were making it big back in Wisconsin.

The cycle selling of this place was now left to realtor Frazier. He found Ben Hall, who didn't have a farm. Ben didn't mind taking a stab at the land, with dreams of getting rid of the quack grass by plowing it in August. Not realizing that most of those acres were sub-irrigated, he too was forced to dump the farm back to the Wisconsinites.

It was beginning to look like the land was jinxed, but that didn't stop Fred Magin from trying to see if he could handle the place. But bad farming luck hit poor Fred right in the face. It forced him to throw the sales contract into the heating stove.

Jones and Nelson were getting frantic. For all those years, their eastern Washington farm kept tumbling back in their laps. It got to a point where in 1933 they wrote dad and I, stating in so many words that we could have

all those lake holes, the pretty weather beaten rocks, and all the places that grew lovely wild flowers as a gift, if we would please give them \$15 an acre for what is farm land. Nothing down, no interest, just half the yearly crop as payment.

Deals like that usually work. Sometimes it takes landowners that long to learn how to sell a farm permanently. I never did figure out why I sold the choice part of

that farm for the same price I gave for it. I was never given any credit for trying to stop inflation.

With all it's trials and tribulations, this once quack grass laden field has now found a permanent owner. It's starting to grow lots of 50 bushel an acre wheat. Truthfully, it did bug me a little when the new owner found a simple way to get rid of quack grass.

Spring Will Come

The winter of 1985 no one died that had an interest to be buried in the Rocklyn cemetery, so the road to this grave site was not plowed out. When spring failed to arrive, the county road plowers made up their minds to push the snow off of this well graded cemetery road. In the process they made snow banks taller than a four-wheel drive pickup. South Rocklyn easily won the snow-fall title for that year.

Good gosh, it was March! Not even the snow that was piled on top of the dead had melted enough to indicate that spring may come some day. While sitting on the tombstone of Frieda and Ed Mielke, I couldn't help but think back to 1934, when spring arrived the first of February. We didn't have guts enough to put in a crop that early, so on February 17th I started to summerfallow. Orlin Maurer had over a quarter plowed before February ended.

When March came that year, wild flowers were at their peak. On March 25th strips of winter wheat on the south slopes measured 22 inches high. One June 30th, Paul Jahn beat me getting the first load of wheat to the warehouse. What a wild and wooly year that was. Of course when nature leaves out winter, what can you expect?

Since 1934, we had much more snow, and colder weather than this year, but it always ended decently when it came time for the snow to go. A person really has to go back to 1921 to find a winter as long as this one. That winter started out early too, and there was still plenty of snow covering the hills, and dales on March 21st.

In 1921, that long winter came as no surprise to neighbor Ben Hall. Before the snows set in, Ben killed a hog for meat eating purposes. In the process of disemboweling the animal, he found an extra long spleen ar-

ound the liver somewhere, indicating an extra long and rough winter.

Those 'way out' weather prophets are all gone now, and so is most of the home slaughtering. Times also have changed on how we put up with recent winters.

Our houses are better insulated and heat works automatically by the turn of the dial. Powerful self-propel rigs make short work of moving snow from long stretches of country roads. Usually a day or two after a snow storm, we can make it to town to pick up some fresh fruit, and vegetables from California.

Living through a winter now is a far cry from those real early settlers. Especially the ones that started frontier life in sod houses, on the blizzard blown prairies of the Dakotas. Mother used to tell us how they would string a rope from their sod house to the barn. During a blinding snow storm, when chore time came, the only safe way of getting to the barn and back, was the hand-over-hand rope method.

Anyway, it will soon be Easter. Maybe by then we will be able to see and smell lots of black wet ground. Easter used to be the time to put on your best 'Sunday-go-meeting' clothes. Easter morning services gave women an excuse to put hats of every description on their heads. Entering the church without a pair of white gloves was frowned upon.

Even the Easter Rabbit has changed her habits too. Dad told us that the Easter Bunny would come to our place, carrying all her Easter eggs in her tummy. Sister and I would line our boxes with straw to make them soft for Bunny's posterior, and place them under the kitchen window. During the dead of night, the Easter Bunny would nestle down cozy-like, and lay lots of colored Easter eggs in our boxes. In some ways, in those days, Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny had the same kind of working hours.

Letters From The Past

"Winter snow soon will go, over the hills and far below. Gentle laughing, merry spring, soon will bring back the little birds to sing." Nearly a hundred years ago, this poem was recited at Sasson schoolhouse. Their small program initiated the coming of spring, and the closing of school for the season. (Just a three month stretch in those days.)

To the early settlers, the returning of the small prairie birds was their omen that spring had arrived. We still

depend on the vocal chords of the meadowlark to announce their arrival. As a kid, I don't remember seeing any robins. In my youthful days, we also waited for the returning of the bluebirds. Those darn starlings have now murdered all the bluebirds that used to fly to a safe looking farmstead so they could have their baby birdies. Aunt Emma used to call us up when bluebirds arrived at their tree laden farm. The early birds always landed there first.

Running across a box of old letters written in 1919, I

was reminded of what winter and spring was like on the Grob farm. That winter found the Kiks in California. Through a twice a month letter exchange Minnie Grob and her daughters, Esther, Edna and Naomi gave us a complete diary of what we were missing up here in our homeland.

Minnie wrote that she had heard her first meadow-lark in February. Spring managed to come early that year. In fact, it made a stab at wanting to appear in January, but it got fooled when winter returned without bringing any snow, and froze out all the winter wheat.

February on the Grob farm was a busy one. Men folks were busy sharpening harrow teeth, giving all the harnesses a neat's-foot oil bath and a repair job. Several days were set aside for emptying sacks of stored seed wheat into a hand cranked fanning mill for a good cleaning. Part of the afternoons were taken up by breaking a couple of colts that had reached adulthood, so they would pull their share of the load without fussing.

That post war type of flu came in heavy doses in those days. In January it spread like wild fire after a surprise party was given for Rocklyn mail carrier, Guy Bartett and wife. The next day, the flu knocked out Bartett, and mail was carried for three weeks by Jack Telford who was still on his feet. The flu also wiped out five children in a family of nine. (The Klosters.)

The following week Minnie wrote, "We have finished reseeded all the winter wheat, and had lots of rain. Every seed came up, and we are all feeling a little better now about the prospects of making a living." She also stated, "I got 30 young chicks hatched so far, and have 15 hens setting, each on a boxfull of eggs. Will set about six more clucks to-morrow, so you see it keeps me going like a whirl wind all the time. It's been a coon's age since I have been to Davenport."

Country Schools And Country Preachers

While browsing the streets of Odessa during the high point of the Deutsches Fest, I spotted an array of early day photos in Del's barber shop that were facing the street. A photo that caught my eye was a small unpainted schoolhouse. According to the barber shop's owner and operator, no one seems to know much about that educational site. It's just taken for granted that it was located between Odessa and some God forsaken spot.

That pioneer one room schoolhouse had the inside measurement of a small living room. In fact, the teacher and her handful of various sized pupils that posed outside, overpowered the building. Really, in those days they didn't make other schoolhouses much bigger. If you added on a place for the water bucket, coats, and overshoes that mini-schoolhouse filled the bill in those lunch bucket days.

A church and a schoolhouse, then another church and a schoolhouse. That was the pattern the pioneers set up for us out here in the Rocklyn country. There were not great differences between the Methodist and the Evangelical spiritual beliefs, except for the spelling. For many years, the separation of church and state didn't exist in the Methodist district. The schoolteacher was also the

Edna wrote that she was walking to school that week and didn't get home 'til 5 o'clock. She said when her goose got hungry, she made an awful lot of noise. Little sister Naomi wrote the shortest letter received. "Walter and Carl (her brothers) went to a surprise party last night. They all had to have a riddle. Here was Carl's riddle. When the clock strikes thirteen, what time is it? It's time to fix the clock. I think I better close." Naomi.

In April, 20 preachers descended on Rocklyn. The district conference was held in that small Evangelical church. There were almost more preachers than members attending. Before conference, Minnie wrote that since we were gone, it left only six families to keep 20 preachers. She stated, "I promised to take four, but I don't know where I'll put them, maybe in the barn, or I suppose that is where I'll land. With Emma Maurer in Pullman, we are running short handed for places to put the preachers." Esther also wrote that we should try and make it back from California, as my mom would have a grand and glorious time cooking for the preachers.

"The preachers are coming! The preachers are coming!" It was a big deal that spring. The Grobs took action before the big event, and went to Spokane to buy an extra bed and mattress, so the preachers wouldn't have to sleep sardine style. Minnie was busy the week before the conference washing curtains, bed blankets, and spreads besides all the spring house cleaning.

Acutally when that big event was over, an empy feeling came over that small congregated bunch of Evangelicals. They were stewards for a lot of preachers during those busy conference days. Then suddenly the preacher population dropped to one and he only showed up every other Sunday morning when he arrived from Harrington.

kids' preacher.

Besides teaching the ABC's, it was Reverend Mann's unchallenged duty to see that the school kids lived by the 'Good Book,' and minded their papas and their mamas. The Reverend usually hitched a ride to and from the schoolhouse by hopping into the back end of Mielkes' buggy box. This constant diet of teacher-preacher exposure six times a week left very little space for the Mielke kids to figure things out for themselves. However, it did make darn good Methodists out of them.

To the north of the Zion district, stood the Evangelical setup. It had a bigger schoolhouse, and a smaller church. The reason was that our district had more kids and less people bent on going to church.

Our schoolhouse was typical of its time. It had all the equipment to make an early day one room school functional. There was a barn for the riding horses and the horses that pulled a couple of ever present buggies, two pit toilets, and one woodshed. Also a pump that had no windmill over it, and a flag pole for showing what country we lived in. Sagebrush was chopped out between the barn and schoolhouse so we kids could play games during the noon hour.



With all that neat setting for a country education, I got off to a bad start. School had been going for two weeks before dad took me over and introduced me to the teacher. She was busy with two advanced first graders, so she left some mixed red and blue sticks on my desk. The teacher told me to sort out and count how many sticks of each color I had and tell her. Since I never counted colored sticks before and I wasn't too sure of my counting ability, panic set in. Seeing big boys and girls in grades beyond doing tricks with figures on the blackboard didn't help things either.

I ran over to where the teacher was and told her I had to use the backhouse. Instead I went three miles straight home. Later the teacher was informed that I had passed through Rocklyn.

The next morning, mother cried as she packed some lunch in a lard bucket. She told me I had to go to school, and said if I got a wiggle on I'd make it to Rocklyn in time to walk the rest of the way to school with kids I knew. For reasons known only to me, I let the kids disappear down the road, then I beat it to a stubble field that was across the road from the schoolhouse.

Laying in a field all day, looking at a lot of stubble brought no joy, but it was better than trying to figure out that stick game. At noon I could see kids playing and making joyful noises. Then I ate my first homemade lunch away from home. When school let out, I cut across fields, dodging roads as I headed for home.

Years later, rumors had it that I spent my first two weeks of schooling in a stubble field. Not so, my parents were too smart. The next day dad laid a trap for me. When school let out, he spotted my head bobbing out of the stubble and he flushed me out.

Only a child psychologist could explain why I got myself into such a mess. It didn't take my folks long to decide that I should wait 'til sister was old enough for school. I then wouldn't have a chance to dart into the stubble field. When the first grade finally soaked in, I should have been in the third grade. I forever blew the opportunity of becoming a whiz kid.

I was asked whether lunches were ever served at the Rocklyn schools. Yes, when the weather got cold enough to put frost in our lunch pails, something hot was added to our hard boiled eggs and peanut butter-jelly sandwiches. There was an old round wick burner kerosene stove stored out in the woodshed. Upon orders from the teacher, a couple of the older boys carried it into the schoolhouse, and placed it near the teacher's desk. A portable oven made out of tin was placed on the burners when a sweet potato, or just a plain finger burning baked spud was on the menu.

Making something hot to warm the stomach always made the schoolroom smell like mother's kitchen. We were told each evening what piece of food to bring that could be cooked, baked or sometimes by accident, cremated. The most popular mouth watering stuff was when

our teacher, Sadie Koch assigned each of us to bring a certain vegetable from our cellars.

Around 11 o'clock on soup day, Sadie would drop teaching and pick up the vegetables so she could perform a scrubbing and slicing job on them. When all that stuff became hot and soft like, it was lunch time. Most of us considered vegetable soup quite a treat, even with that cellar storage taste. Also there was no buckshot to pick out, like in jack rabbit stew.

When the winter snows began to blow over at the Zion district, hot soup was also high on the menu. But the makings and the floating ingredients were a little different over there. In the evenings, the preacher's wife Maria cooked up a kettle of split peas or lentils which turned into lots of soup when she added a heavy dose of water. It was her cholesterol free specialty.

The next morning Maria would send that pot of soup along with her teacher-preacher husband when he left early to fire up the schoolhouse. It was a simple maneuver when the noon hour arrived. That kettle of watery green stuff was placed on the school's heating stove for about 20 minutes. It had the same convenience that we now enjoy with our modern TV dinners. That is if your taste ran in the split pea soup department.

When Sunday morning came, there was also quite a difference between the two districts on what the preacher's chores were like. The Zion preacher lived right alongside of his church, and had very little to do 'til preaching time arrived. Our minister didn't have it so soft. Preacher survival at Rocklyn without an additional job would have been too slim a picking to keep any minister's spirits in preaching shape.

Rev. Hounsberger, the long distance preacher lived at Harrington where he took care of another church. Sunday morning found Hounsberger having to face the fact that he had to sit in a buggy for nearly two hours. It took that long for his horse to pull him to within a good view of the Zion church, then on north until the Rocklyn church loomed up on the flats of the Rocklyn country.

To save our preacher that long buggy ride, why didn't the two churches go together, and settle for one place of worship? Well that's sort of a complicated story that didn't allow for a breakthrough to a solution. For one thing there were no consolidation ideas floating around in those days.

In 1925 the Evangelical church folded up. It left us marching to Zion to the church on the hill. Over there the preacher was in the process of trying to wean the older generation from the German language. It finally got down to where Rev. Mann preached his sermon in German. Then he sailed through it again in English. That system of operation made the older folks happy, but it left younger ears to record nothing 'til switchover time came.

Sounds silly? Well it served a little purpose. That breather from the German language did give the parents time out to watch and see if we were soaking in what the preacher was saying. Also they could laugh for the second time, when the preacher told the same joke in English.

As time passed, the German language got wiped out totally at the Zion setup. The older folks survived OK without receiving their spiritual messages in their native tongue. Both neighborhood preachers loved to talk a lot, and would have fitted in very nicely with our present day fundamentalists.

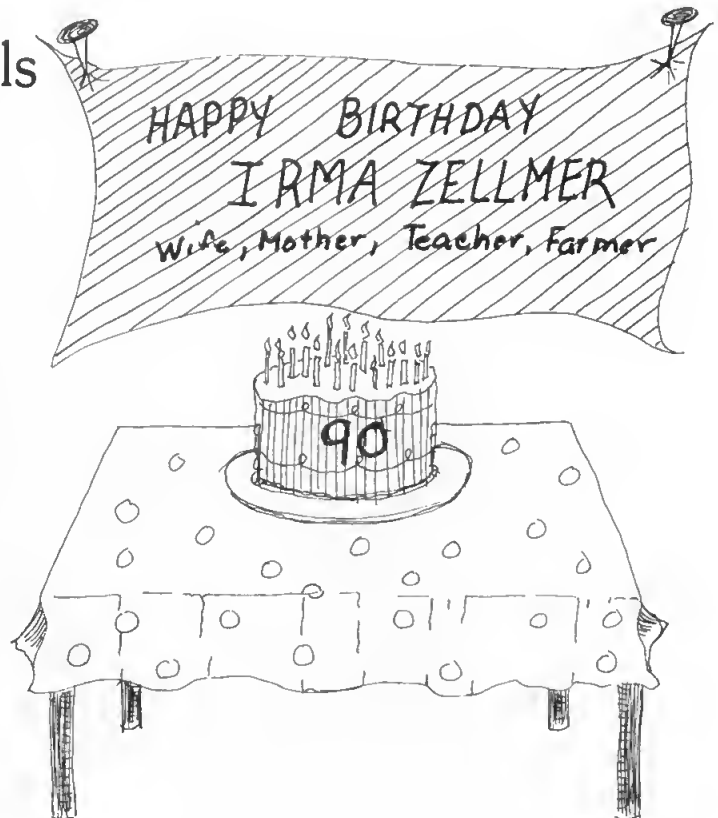
More On Country Schools

The sorting out process of life leaves less people each year to celebrate those birthdays that are connected with the makings of Lincoln County. One such event occurred the last Sunday in October, 1985. That's when Irma Zellmer rang in her 90th birthday at the Davenport Methodist Church.

For those that don't happen to know Irma, she is a friendly lady that has spent a large proportion of her years as a working partner with her farming husband. Irma is the mother of Judge Zellmer, teacher Vern and Richard who with his family resides on a once stately farmstead. It's been modernized, but in the pre-Zellmer days it was the show place for a lot of interesting early day social gatherings, but that's another story.

If time could take us back three score and ten years, you would find Irma teaching kids of all sizes out at the old Sassin school (south of Edwall). Her scholars are now retired or have served their allotted time.

This flashback causes me to go on another school binge. . . so here goes. The Sassin one room school was built in 1889. During that era other parts of the county were also busy building schools so their kids wouldn't turn into blockheads. Just take a look at an old surveyor's map



of Lincoln County, and you will see that at one time there were over 60 schoolhouses dotting the country side.

Those quaint little schoolhouses are all gone now. The coup de grace came in the late 1920s and early 30s. Some were moved and used by farmers as graineries or chicken houses. Most of those rural teachers married themselves off to young farmers. Those educated ladies were considered real catches by the eligible bachelors.

It's hard to believe but a twinkle of the past still lives on. Over on the coastal San Juan Islands, there is a classic one room school whose bell still tolls for the dawdling students. It was built two years after Sassin pioneers layed out their school. It's been operating continually ever since, and is now on the National Register of Historic Places. However, the school is plugged into the modern world via a minicomputer which kids use in their school-work.

Before closing the chapter on Sassin school, let's take a brief peek at what school was like nearly a century ago. When Sassin opened up it's brand new school, kids of all ages arrived and were ready to absorb some education. One of my aunts was already too old for school and never had a chance to receive any formal knowlege. Dad was a border line case, but did look a little younger than the teacher. However, upon reaching the fourth grade the little kids started calling him whiskers, so he quit. The teacher, Lydia Hemmersmith had only a fifth grade education and sort of learned along with the older kids.

When the weather got cold there were no hot lunches; their stomachs had the job of warming up the food that was in their lunch pails. One day a lunch dispute caused an afternoon vacation to set in for the whole student body. It started when the teacher brought a can of

sardines to school and told the boys there should be enough little suckers in the tin for a taste of fish for each one. When the flat tin can got to Alby Jurry he gobbled down what sardines were left, leaving the last boy, Johnny McPherson without a fish treat. Johnny just wanted to whop Alby for being a hog, but it turned into pounding the stuffings out of each other.

When the fight ended, the two battlers walked home, so did the rest of the boys and girls. This left Lydia the teacher with nothing to do but to walk home also.

The Sassin and Rocklyn districts are just small examples of early day school life that the youngsters encountered. In my own environment, the Sassin school with it's small church and a cemetery down the road away gave a perfect setting for the 'little house on the prairie' atmosphere.

This community in summer enjoyed the scab lands that wound through the district. It held the running waters of Rock Creek that emptied into Crab Creek. This territory had a mini-falls that produced power for grinding the settlers' grain. There were just lots of choice spots where camp meetings, picnics and outings were held.

Farther down this ancient drainage bed was where the Lincoln-Adams county Pioneer Picnic grounds was located. It had a pavilion, grandstand, race tracks, and all the paraphernalia that goes with such big early day blow-outs. From the Sassin school house landmark it isn't too far to the oldest continually occupied log house in the State of Washington. (I think so; it's never been challenged). Built 117 years ago, it's getung a remodeling job by it's present owner. In the early 1870s stage coaches would stop there to allow passengers to do some leg stretching and later it housed the Sassin Post Office.



Davenport in 1884 - Fourth U.S. Infantry Camped in Main Street.

An Event In Judge Zellmer's Life

Frontier justice may have been crude, but the merits were the same as now, although some judges didn't always abide by their sworn oath. I remember my dad telling about an early day judge, and his son-in-law, who was a lawyer. They got into a dispute, and didn't take it to court. Instead they got into a downtown fist fight. The two had been drinking causing them to rely on their basic instincts.

Over 50 years ago I saw Will Rogers in a movie role as a country town justice of the peace. Will was scolding a guy for being hauled before his bench for the second time. This pest was making a public nuisance of himself by pestering people on the streets. No it wasn't over any abortion issue. This guy found other reasons to hamper citizens from moving about freely, so into the clink the justice of the peace had him put.

Our own Judge Willard Zellmer has a much more educated way of handling problems than our early day peace makers had. It's quite a responsibility to be a judge now, with all the complicated angles that appear on the 20th century scene. You just got to know your stuff. These anti-abortion people could have some excitement going for them while their gold plated, publicity seeking lawyer is testing out the first amendment.

It's a simple trick for certain religious folks to force their kind of law on the rest of us by saying, "That's what God said for us to do, and we are going to march here until the Lord tells us differently." If they are really hearing voices from outer space, it could be that they are hallucinating. In that case they need special psychiatric treatment.

Zellmer's sentences brought out this brave statement



from the ladies, when they said they would rather rot in jail than burn in hell. Even though the flames of hell are for eternity, that divine threat wore off in a few days, and the ladies decided not to start rotting in jail. After getting themselves sprung, they marched down to Davenport and asked Willard what he was going to do about that hellhole of a jail in Spokane.

Now that's asking too much from a visiting judge that was called as a helper to administer a point of law in Spokane county. There is no legal way that Judge Zellmer could decorate the jail for them. Someone should tell all prospective jail patrons that there are no special catering services available.

Talk about the spreading notoriety of our own country bred judge; that Sunday when Sugar and I completed running in a rodeo run out west at Coulee City, a short type lady spectator who knew who I was, came up to talk. After visiting briefly she said, "Judge Zellmer is not a Christian. If he was a Christian he wouldn't be jailing those pickets that are working for the Lord."

Hearing words like that sort of tightened up my tongue. Finally I asked her what church she belongs to. She told me she was a Bible believer. Then I told her I didn't doubt her beliefs, but was wondering what denomination she attends. She then informed me she attends where the Bible is believed and lived by.

After she sort of put a curse on me for my viewpoints on religion, Sugar and I took a drive through Coulee City's main street. Sure enough, about a block away from the town tavern, and a saloon stood an old narrow building that had a large sign splashed over the top of its door which read, 'Bible Believers Meet Here.'

It seems as the years go by there are more branches added to the tree of religion. I wish I'd have told that screwed up lady that Judge Zellmer has been church minded all his life and that his pioneer ancestors were chuck full of religion.

The Judge has been active in about every department of the Methodist church. When I was Sunday School superintendent I taught Willard's high school class part-time while he was attending law school.

When young Zellmer came back to his home town church, he took over his old class. I was glad he did, as I was drifting toward material thinking and that's bad for a Sunday school teacher to do. I found Willard increasingly taking an important role as a balance wheel between the young and the old church members when it came to practicing stable religion.

Good gosh! Ever since Willard's high school days, his voice has been blending with the church choir and for years he was a delegate to the Pacific Northwest Conference. He was one of the earliest travelers to use the north pole crossing on his way to London as a delegate to the 11th World Methodist Conference.

That's my version of Judge Zellmer's record as a Christian. I wish I had been better prepared to explain to folks who like to pass judgement on someone else's Christianity.

Nevins, a Unique Judge

While President Roosevelt was giving us hope over the radio with his fireside chats, a Spanish-American War veteran was our Superior Court Judge. He was the very honorable, Judge William Nevins.

He came to the bench bringing with him his unique life style that was independently of his own making. An individualist of the novel kind, yet his eccentric ways never influenced him in handing out fair decisions. I don't believe Lincoln County will ever produce another judge just like him.

The judge's stately board like figure, especially when he walked from place A to place B, could be recognized blocks away. His striped bird-legged pants and plug hat was his trade mark when he reached judgeship status.

A bachelor by choice, yet he was able to hand out some practical advice to the maturing young men about town. I asked a couple of Nevins old proteges if his advice was of practical value. "Yes" was the answer, "especially when some of us guys were inclined to sow some wild oats in our younger years." Seems like the knowledge the judge handed out came from his own experience.

It would take another column to squeeze in all the stories about the judge's way of life. Since many tales can't be verified, it wouldn't be fair. I'm sure Nevins' ghost had to suffer a few of them. Like the story about the judge stopping his car on the side of the road every time his speedometer counted off a 1000 miles for an immediate oil change. Since no one said they saw the judge's skinny legs sticking out from under his car, changing oil, it's hard to believe.

That juicy story got started when the judge bought a new 1928 Dodge Victory coupe. The car's manual read to change the oil at 1000 miles. When that amount of miles showed up on his speedometer, he was cruising around the Sprague area. The judge stopped at the nearest telephone and called Raymer, the garage man in Davenport. Raymer told the judge it was safe to drive back to town where a service man would be waiting to get rid of that worn out oil. Nevins' relic is now owned by Gary and Marian Geib of Wilbur.

The judge always ate his main meal at the downtown restaurant. He was one of our first healthy eaters. However, he did like a slice of roast beef to go with his daily noon meal of one large bowl of chopped cabbage with a back up bowl that was filled with lettuce. It was the waitress' chore to see that gobs of vinegar and oil was supplied to pour over all that green stuff.

One day the judge disappeared after he was seen seated next to his two bowls of dinner. Finally the judge returned with a head of lettuce in his hand that he had purchased at the grocery store. He handed it to the waitress to be chopped up. The lettuce in his bowl that day was too wilted to slide down the judge's throat.

In the late 1930s, I was witnessing a trial of mild interest, when Judge Nevins suddenly declared a recess by announcing, "I believe some of the jurors may like to hear (by radio) the Joe Louis fight. That's what I'm going to do. I assure you the recess will be a short one." Heavyweight champion Louis, the 'Brown Bomber,' was



The present Lincoln County Superior Court Judge, Willard Zellmer, enjoys the history of the late Judge Nevins who passed away in 1963. Judge Zellmer is standing by a picture of the unforgettable judge who Zellmer describes as part of the folklore of Lincoln County.

known as a quck knock-em-cold type of fighter. Sure enough, the judge predicted correctly. In less than 20 minutes, the court was back in session.

I couldn't help but admire Nevins for doing what his inherited genes nudged him to do, rather than follow the protocol. A song that I like, "I Did It My Way," applies to the judge. His face always looked sober. When the judge was visiting, I never saw him burst into a laughing spell.

How did William Nevins get started in life? Well, the first thing he did when he turned into a man was to serve two years in the army during the Spanish American War. Upon coming west from Iowa, Nevins worked on a stock ranch, and homesteaded in the Odessa area. He also taught school at Bluestem and around Odessa.

Deciding to get smarter, Nevins got a hold of more education, so he could become a lawyer. This path eventually lead him to become our judge for Lincoln County. He served from 1928 to 1944. Then he slipped back in as judge from 1952 to 1956.

All those years of Judge Nevin's wage earnings made him grow heavily in monetary value. He didn't have a family to raise, and his Dodge Victory Six didn't cost him much to run because he changed the oil at the correct time. The judge just simply piled up a lot of dough!

The Veterans of Foreign Wars figured it would be an honor to have his honor become a member of their organization as a representative of the Spanish-American War. To get the judge interested, they paid his membership dues.

This so pleased his honor that he left this veteran group a good size slice of his inheritance. That organiza-

tion is now able to perform civic projects from the Nevins fund. Though he was not a religious guy, he left a good size chunk of his left over dough when he died to the four main churches in Davenport. Wherever the judge landed after his retirement, he dug into his inheritance bag a little deeper. A nursing home and the Odessa hospital were remembered very well by this reserved bachelor.

When Judge Nevins passed away in 1963, the Davenport Times was asked by a reader, "How come there was no picture in the paper of the deceased judge?" The next week's Times printed the answer to this reader's question. It seems years before the judge's retirement, a photographer was sent to get some pictures of Nevins. This is what Judge Nevins told the photographer. "Once, years ago, I was seated inside of an outhouse on a nearby farm when a startling shriek sounded outside of the door.

In alarm, without thinking, I kicked the door open to see what was going on. I heard a shutter snap and saw a friend standing there with a camera pointed directly at my somewhat exposed frame. I arose, made some necessary adjustments and attacked, destroying the film in the camera.

"There has never been another photo taken of me. And there never will be." This concluded His Honor's statement.

That's what the judge thought. Sugar's brother-in-law, George Mielke, at considerable risk, sneaked up on old Judge Nevins at a Harrington barbeque and snapped a picture of his honor's face. It was the only known picture ever taken of the judge. In memory of a unique judge, Judge Zellmer had an enlargement made of George's prized picture. It's now hanging on the court room wall.

Promoter, Judge Warren

Let me share what an old time judge had to say about our county. From 1900 to 1907, Lincoln County didn't know how great it was 'til a smart guy by the name of W.T. Warren got elected judge. He not only took care of horse thieves, and other bad guys that needed to be punished, he promoted our county as worth considering, if at all interested in living a prosperous life.

When Judge Warren spoke, Lincoln County listened. To him, the name of Lincoln carried thoughts of freedom from bondage. "No other county in the State of Washington can show as many citizens who came to it broke and in debt, and who are now living in ease and comfort, free from debt and with money in the bank, as Lincoln County," so said Judge Warren. It's interesting to know that Lincoln County had a financial secret that we now have lost.

For those of us that grew up here years ago, this early day judge makes us feel that we were the greatest. He stated, "Lincoln County citizens are the most independent and up to date class of citizens to be found anywhere in the state." His reasons were that Lincoln County Pioneers grew up rugged on sage brush, jack rabbits, and cayuse ponies. The other counties must have been short of these basic ingredients.

The judge went on to say, "I cannot call to mind a single farmer who came to town to do his trading, who came in a buggy or surrey; they came for necessities in an ordinary farm wagon, using a board with cleats nailed on it in place of a spring seat, for the reason that the spring seat cost extra, and they did not have the means to buy it."

Since many progressive settlers had family sized orchards, Judge Warren had visions that our county was fast becoming the fruit center of the Inland Empire. He made this statement; "Up to ten years ago, the man who attempted to raise fruit on the high land and away from the river bottoms would have been considered a fit subject for the insane asylum; today the upland fruit grower is considered on par with, if not ahead of the river bottom orchardist."



The judge proceeds to tell about all those fruit trees that I missed seeing when I was a kid. "Peaches, pears, plums, apricots, and berries grow to such perfection in this county, that we do not have to take our hats off to any other county in the state. Our orchards are young, thrifty and free from disease . . . We can even now make some of the fruit growing counties open their eyes."

Even the mule raisers around Harrington caught the gazing eyes of Judge Warren, and brought forth this statement from him; "In portions of the county the farmers have engaged extensively in mule raising with such success that the Missouri or Kentucky mule breeders would be made to turn green with envy."

Reardan came in for some praises too. The judge spotted a sorghum mill that town. It had just started to

use the cane which he said was being raised along the Spokane River. A concrete factory was busy making concrete vaults for storing surplus money in. He also mentioned Harrington as the future manufacturing spot for farm machinery.

The judge recognized Davenport for its soda water factory. Maybe the courthouse and the Judge's Chamber was all he figured Davenport was capable of. However he did state that Davenport grew lots of extra high grade wheat, which we all know, so that's not old time news.

Seems like it was important to the judge about wanting everyone to know that our county was full of Christians. He states; "Lincoln County is a Christian county. I am unable to say exactly how many churches there are in the county, but from where I sit at my desk I can count eight church spires raising heavenward . . . and Sunday

schools are held in various school houses."

Judge Warren left a lot of praises for us Lincoln County blue bloods to gloat over. It should give us enough ego to last to our dying day. Here is his final statement: "The farmers of Lincoln County are not the typical hay-seeds we are pictured in the funny papers, but the strong, healthy, intelligent men and women, well read, independent and self-confident, who are able to hold their own with any people on earth, capable of conversing intelligently on any subject from wheat raising to high finance . . . (I didn't know that.)

"Taking it all in all with our great natural advantages and the character of our citizens, as a whole, a man can truly be proud of the fact that he is a citizen of the greatest county in the greatest state in these United States, LINCOLN COUNTY WASHINGTON."

Pioneer Picnic

Before the turn of the century, the idea of a pioneer picnic on Crab Creek entered the minds of our early settlers. The first picnic was on the primitive side. The tall grass was their chairs. Songs and speeches were heard echoing through that wide coulee. For horse racing, they used the trail-like roads that wind through pastures and fields. Foot races took place where rocks and sagebrush were scarce. For that one day outing, everyone brought enough food to keep their bellies full.

In 1902, this pioneer group got big enough to turn itself into the Lincoln-Adams Counties Historical Association. To be a member, all you had to do was to have lived around here before Washington became a state.

That active bunch really went to work down on Crab Creek. They laid out and built all the things needed to make those pioneer people happy for three days. An authentic horse race track was scooped out, and a large grandstand was connected to the track. For evenings of paired off closeness, a good sized dance pavillion was erected. A midway was laid out for hucksters, a merry-go-round, and a speakers stand for acts of entertainment. One year a pretty lady did some death defying stunts from a smoke filled balloon that was on its way to the sky.

It's too bad that more of these pioneer picnic events were not put down in writing. All we have now is just a mouth to mouth recall of past events, that can get lost through repetition. The time I attended was the year the depression put the picnic on its last legs. My dad's highlight of the picnic was the year his life long friend Max Mecklenburg was busy showing off Lincoln County's first airplane to the crowd. My aunt Minnie won all the foot races for her age group while living at Edwall. All relatives of pioneer families had similar stories to tell.

Fortunately I have received quite a few letters that have a lot of authentic old time information. Upon reading Kik-backs, Bob Harding of Sprague was reminded that his old uncle, Johnnie Harding went with the Kik brothers to homestead in the Lake Creek area. Bob then called me up and told me that Ruby Harding, Johnnie's half-sister is still very much alive, and has been living in Los Angeles since 1920.

This exciting news caused me to send a letter to Ruby. The information I received from her was like hitting the jack-pot. She remembers so well when as an adolescent, she attended those early day Lincoln-Adams County picnics. Her letter of recalls is unique and histori-



Parking grounds near the race tracks.



The beginning of Main Street on the Pioneer Picnic grounds.

cal. With her permission, here are the important contents:

"Dear Walt. I enjoyed your book very much . . . John Harding was my half brother. He used to tell us stories about the days he and Charlie Kik worked for Jack Lucas on the Figure Three Ranch near Sprague Lake. He was always a glamorous figure to me. Very gentle, but lots of fun. He used to come home every fall to help father hunt wild geese, sage hens, and prairie chickens which abounded in those days, also to take the current school 'marm' to a couple of country dances.

"My aunt Agnes' husband, George Tufts used to tell us stories of Wild Goose Bill . . . What a character. The Chappells you mentioned were our neighbors up Lords Valley . . . I saw Will Rogers once in 1921. My mother's foster sister Lois Miller, was working at the Beverly Hills Hotel. I was visiting with her when Will came through the lobby wearing a sheepskin coat and rubber boots. He stopped to give Lois a message, and he gave us both a cute grin.

"I used to camp with my aunt Georgie and her husband Myiell Miller every year at the Pioneer Picnic. It was the main event of the summer. Charlie Bethel would hold forth in the speakers stand. Sleepy Armstrong usually won most of the horse races. Sleepy later became quite a figure in the racing business . . . I have a copy of his history which was written up a few years before he died, I'll send it to you . . . Then there was Mr. Carrico and his Merry-go-round. He had been an old circus man, and it was through the circus that he acquired the Merry-go-round . . . It was of normal size, the same as you'd see at any amusement park today. It was run by a stationary steam engine, and played music. We country kids were fascinated by it. Young couples and a lot of older people rode it . . .

"One year the picnic featured a balloon ascension. We were all thrilled when the balloon was inflated and rose very high into the air, carrying a very fancy looking girl in pink tights, who would perform stunts on a trapeze suspended from a cage of the balloon.

"That was before the automobile and good roads. There were barns to take care of the campers' horses. Some horses were staked out to grass in a nearby field. There were wagons, hacks and buggies parked among the trees . . .

"Before long we had a stage couple from Spokane who came every year to entertain us. They would set up a platform on the 'midway' and sing and put on skits. Both had good voices. She wore her hair very short and was 'stagey' looking, about forty, which we kids considered very old. She always sang, 'If the men were all transported far beyond the northern sea.'

"The 'midway' was occupied with all kinds of booths, where one could buy all kinds of trinkets. Souvenirs, banners, pictures, etc. Also ice cream and cotton candy. Walt McClelland, old Russell Bacon's nephew, who resembled Andy Gump was there writing and selling calling cards. He was a fantastic penman, and had taken many prizes for his fancy scrolls, birds, etc. . . After the ballroom was added, the picnic became more popular than ever with a very good orchestra.

"The period between the Spanish American War and the first World War was a great time to live in the country. People seemed happier and more secure then. Also our language was intact. "Gay" meant only light hearted, and a 'faggot' was only a bundle of sticks prepared for burning . . .

"Those were the days, but we tend to forget about the bad things. The flies for one. Where there were horses there were flies. We had fly poison and tangle foot all over the house. And there was the dust which one kicked up whenever one went, and the chuck holes! Thank God for Mr. Macuham who gave us better roads. I've lived in California ever since 1920, but I'm still a 'Country Jake' at heart.

"Aaron Miller, my step grandfather and family were the first to promote the picnic. Others were the Baldwins, Gees, Kitty Johnson and her husband, Jake Smith who fought in the civil war . . . and a group from Ritzville.

"There are a lot of old characters I could tell you

about. You're too young to remember Joe Pickle, Tom Lakina and his nephew Tobe. Anita Malinado and her step father 'Old Grizzly Revenaugh!' The only old timers I know in Harrington are George Umberwast and Frank Gately.

"I remember well those pioneer picnic days . . . Besides the entertainment, getting together to catch up on

local news, sharing picnic lunches, having foot races and other games...In addition to horse races there were baseball games and a pretty good track meet. People came from all over for these events . . . One year we came home in a header box. You have a writing style reminiscent of the sagebrush and scab rock of that country." Love, Ruby

A Visit With Ruby Harding

The following year I got a phone call from Bob Harding. He stated that his historical aunt Ruby (one of such rare breeds left) is up from Los Angeles. She is taking time out from her busy schedule of enjoying life, and attending the Santa Anita race track. Ruby grew up in the Harrington-Sprague area. Having corresponded with her, I was anxious to meet her.

On my way down to the Harding Brothers ranch, I couldn't help but wonder why Ruby, still in her prime forsook her homeland for a spot in Los Angeles.

Upon meeting her, the pleasure was all mine. This alert girl, who soon will be seeing 90 years of life on this planet, had a lot to tell me. This veteran at living, who calls herself a 'Country Jake' at heart, has fallen for the glamour of California living, and loves every minute of it.

Ruby fully intended to come back to her old nesting place, but the depression of the 30s locked her in down there. Under the Roosevelt administration, the Federal Government got on the ball, and took care of a lot of stuff. They gave Ruby a chance to make a living by continually employing her in various government departments until retirement set in.

Life got into gear with Ruby when at a tender age she attended a dancing school for kids in Sprague. Before reaching the established age for public dancing, she went to a masquerade dance at Harrington.

As Ruby's friends were older, she wanted to keep up with them, and masqueraded as Little Red Ridinghood. It

assured her just about every dance with 'Jockey' Adams of Harrington, a full grown little guy jockey. Ruby let Adams do all the talking, so he never realized how young she was 'til it was time to pull their disguises off.

Ruby also knew Harrington's 'Sleepy' Armstrong, a nationally known jockey. These two professional horse riders could have planted the early seeds of Ruby's interest in horses. Harrington's history is noted for such goings-on. Ruby happens to be the last of the originals.

After discussing many early events, I asked Ruby what she contributed her good health to. "Horses," was her reply, "When I worry about my favorite horse instead of myself, it keeps me alive, and free of depression."

Ruby has a strong desire to sit down, and write up the many events that she so sharply remembers. But I'm afraid she is too busy living to take that much time out. Ruby would like to move back here when she thinks it's about time to be planted.

Ruby's vivid details of early day Lincoln-Adams Counties Pioneer Picnic has been properly recorded in the Davenport Times Centennial Issue. She will visit the site of the old Pioneer Picnic ground before returning to Los Angeles.

Contrary to my way of thinking, there is strong evidence, that if you spend decades enjoying watching horses run around in circles, you can actually keep from becoming an old grouch. Ruby is living proof of that. She has such an open mind. It was a pleasure visiting with her.

Her Tragic Death

Dreaming about old time Christmases was interrupted last year when Richard and Bob Harding of Sprague called up to inform me that their aunt Ruby lost her life to a couple of thugs down in Los Angeles.

To me, Ruby Harding was the best informed person on Lincoln County history during the era she lived in. Although just a teenager during my dad's escapades in the Sprague-Harrington district, she verified many events that my dad told, also authentic stories I didn't know about.

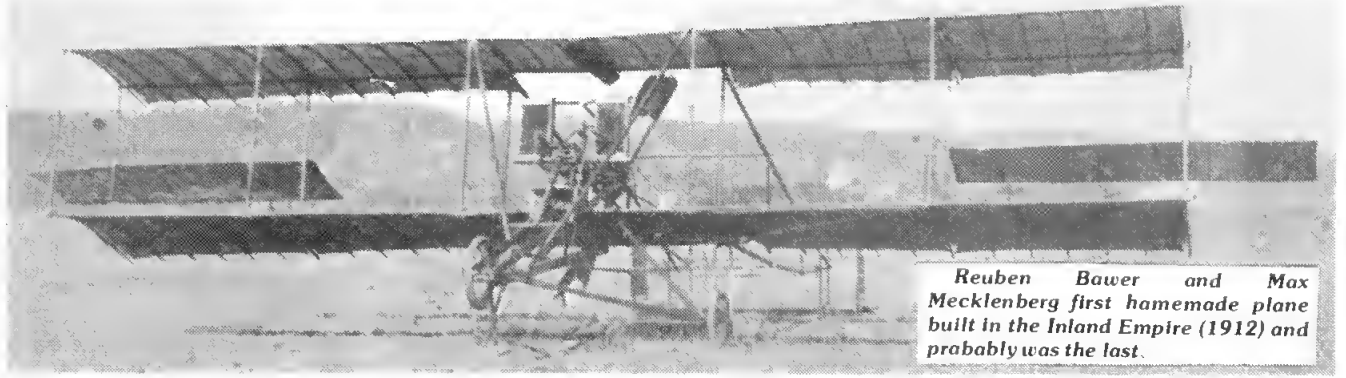
This 90 year old walking historian wasn't ready to accept old age. She was returning from the Santa Anita Race Track where she loved to watch the horses run around. By herself and in front of her apartment, two thugs beat and robbed her, and left her laying on the street. She lived long enough to phone her nephews to tell them that

robbers finally had a chance to do her in.

Ruby didn't mind living in the heart of Los Angeles in all that smog. Last year on her last trip up here, she stated, "There is something happening down there all the time. It might be a murder, and I have been robbed four times."

A highly spirited lady, I marveled at her open mindedness on many subjects. Ruby told Sprague reporter, Maureen Bourne that she feels people are kinder to each other today than in earlier history. "People are more tolerant because everyone is sinning," smiled Ruby. "It's a great life if you know how to handle it. Some people can't. If you take anything too serious, it will get you," added Ruby. Undoubtedly she wasn't serious enough about the risk of living such an independent and self sufficient life in a city that she didn't fear.

A Pioneer Built Plane



Reuben Bower and Max Mecklenberg first homemade plane built in the Inland Empire (1912) and probably was the last.

A few old timers still remember the first plane that flew over Lincoln County in 1919...It had to come down in a stubble field near Rocklyn, because the engine quit working. Now, what about the first homemade plane that made it off of Lincoln County soil?

It was in 1912, out at the Pioneer Picnic grounds, Max Mecklenburg and a partner by the name of Reuben Bower made aviation history.

This big event happened just nine years after the Wright brothers short flight, thus giving Lincoln County a duplicate of the same feat. Except for an added third kite-like wing that stuck out for moral support, the plane was very similar to the Kitty Hawk that is now in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. It was a 'do-it-yourself' built plane. Those guys found plans in a newspaper and a magazine. It was built of spruce and Washington fir, and was powered by a two-cycle 48 H.P. motor that had 300 pounds of pushing power.

When Mecklenburg and Bower got it all glued together, they hauled it down to Harrington from Colville, by wagon. On June 16, 1912, this headless biplane 'The Mecklenburg-Bower Special' was drug out to the Pioneer Picnic grounds and put on exhibition. A tent large enough to conceal this wonder was erected over it. To be able to see this thing that defied gravity, a ticket stand was set up with a 25 cents admission sign pasted on it. Self appointed, would-be pilot Reuben Bower said if sufficient inducement was offered, they would make an exhibition

flight over the grounds.

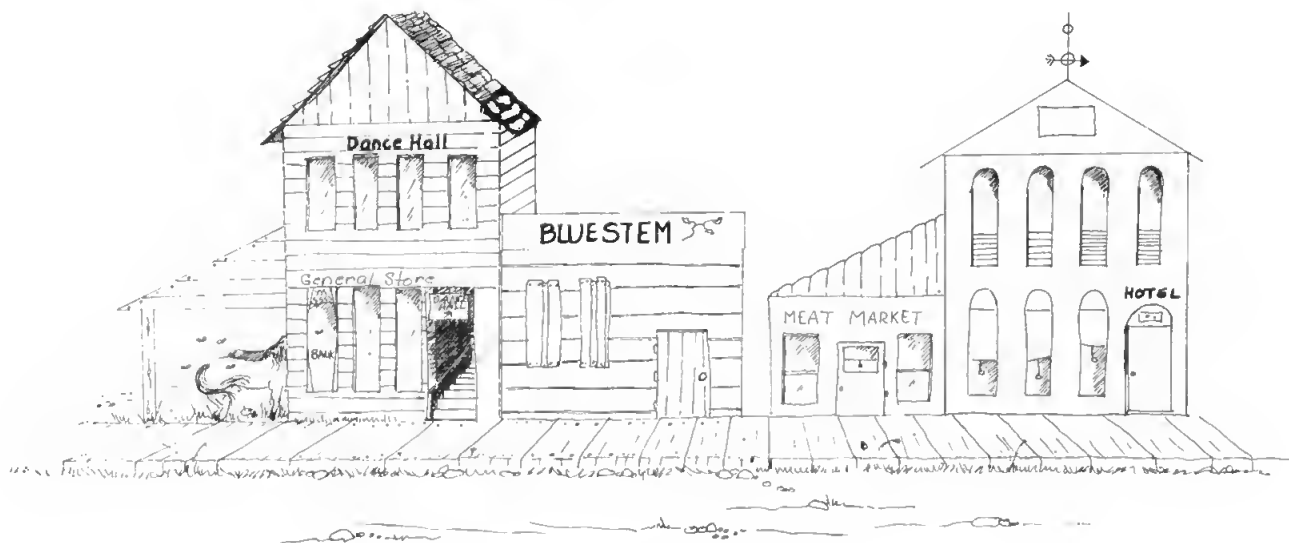
The final day of the Pioneer Picnic was fast coming to an end. The paid up customers were expecting a test flight from that darned contraption. Cold feet sort of set in on those two guys. Rocks and trees around the camp ground looked pretty threatening. Finally, the plane was dragged up out of Crab Creek to a strip of summerfallow. Max told my dad it would be softer, if the plane got up and fell down.

The darn thing did get up and flew about a hundred yards before landing cock-eyed on the edge of the summerfallow. After all, it did make history as being the first plane to fly in the Inland Empire. Mecklenburg and Bower had a much larger crowd watching than the Wright Brothers had, and they didn't have a windy hill to take off from either. Later the plane got off the ground six more times without anyone getting killed.

Not long after that Pioneer Picnic gathering on Crab Creek, pilot Bower died from a busted appendix at the age of 35. Some figured the rough landings did him in. Upon the death of Lincoln County's first pilot, the headless biplane was shipped to California where its fate is unknown. Old Max Mecklenburg did live to a seasoned age. Since this writing his wife passed away in the Davenport Nursing Home, and his son Edward died at the Bluestem farm home. The propeller from Lincoln County's first homemade plane can be viewed for inspection at the Davenport Museum.



68 years ago (1918) a group of guys when trying to fix up a airplane that clunked out over Rocklyn.



Frontier Town

On a Friday night in January 1985, the Bluestem Grange gave me a opportunity to tell what I knew about early day Bluestem. We had a perfect setting for talking over the early days of Bluestem. The foggy weather had a way of knocking out the electricity. The whole Grange ritual, and the lecture hour was conducted by candlelight, just like in the old log cabin days.

This flickering light event was held in the old two story school house. The upper part was never used as a school. It was built by settlers who had dreams that this railroad station would never stop growing.

In 1892, when the Great Northern Railroad got its tracks laid as far as what is now Bluestem, they drove a Moscow sign into the bunchgrass. Settlers took up the hint, and began building a frontier town.

It grew to the size and shape that would have made a perfect setting to suit the modern movie producer of today. All the buildings condensed for frontier town, USA were there.

A well traveled wagon road that fed this town, crossed the railroad tracks as it entered main street. Rows of seven shed like wheat warehouses occupied the railroad siding. Also a depot, and section house.

Across from this fairly wide dirt street, a wooden sidewalk, the full length of the main drag was nailed together. The buildings that were using this boardwalk, were first, a two story hotel, located on the starting end of the wooden sidewalk, followed by a shed like meat market, and storage building.

Then came another two story building. The upstairs of this sturdy structure was the town's dance hall. Downstairs was the general store. A small bricked in bank took up some of the general store. Next to this combination building was the town's livery stable, where the flies had a hard time staying out of the general store.

If you kept walking the boardwalk to the west, a small empty space appeared. It was a place where drunks could sober up before riding their horses out of town. Then came the saloon. If you decided to pass it up, a few steps farther would take you to the restaurant.

Then came a break in the sidewalk. It put you on

ground level, 'til a few feet brought you up to the boardwalk again, where the town's blacksmith shop, and chop mill took up quite a lot of space.

When those old timers got this far through main street, a lot of them thought about getting a shave, and maybe a bath. Handily right west of this wagon repairing and horse shoeing shop was the town's barber shop. From there a stretch down to the end of the wooden sidewalk was the post office. Usually that was the last stop before heading home.

A town without a jail or a church, the citizens must have been able to keep themselves out of trouble. Quite an achievement, especially since they didn't have any protection, or guidelines to follow.

How come that new town of Moscow changed its name to Bluestem? It all got started way down under in Australia. Long before the turn of the century, a spring wheat was growing down there under the name of Bluestem. Later the variety migrated across the ocean, and settled for a while in Davis, California. It didn't like it there; the hot weather gave Bluestem a sickly look.

The wheat was shipped north to a cooler country. The main flow of Bluestem found a home suitable to its natural environment at Moscow.

John Fry, an eccentric farmer with lots of rich acres, farmed north of Moscow. He was so thrilled with the good job Bluestem wheat did to enlarge his already stuffed pocketbook, that he insisted that the newly formed town of Moscow change its name to Bluestem.

It's interesting to note that the last homestead that wasn't taken, was all fenced in by the surrounding settlers to protect their newly gotten land. When word got out that this 160 acres was still up for grabs, Pete Selde, and another guy thought it was worth the race to Sprague. They both headed fast like in that direction. Mr. Selde was 15 minutes faster getting there. The ink was dry before the other interested party arrived.

This ghost town is where our unique Judge Nevins got his start on his way to knowledge, and practical experience. His Honor taught school in Bluestem's old single room school house.

At one time, Bluestem must have been a gay old town. My dad spent one of his early Fourth of July celebrations with the celebrating Bluestemites. About this time, another bank was built, but it never opened, so it didn't have a chance to go into bankruptcy.

Two Old Time Doctors

The early settlers around here must have been well read. There was no excuse if they weren't. Seventy seven years ago, the Lincoln County Times was delivered to homes throughout Lincoln County for only \$1.50 a year. If you were really hooked on reading, for 50 cents extra a year, the Times would see that you got the twice-a-week Seattle P.I.

In the days of cheap newspaper reading, they also had a cure for cancer. Wonder what happened to the cure. An ad read: Cancer cured without pain, knife, inconvenience, or leaving home. The Mason treatment endorsed by the International Medical Congress and prominent physicians to be the only actual cure. All other methods are acknowledged useless.

Speaking of physicians, Davenport had its first inventor doctor scads of years before Dr. Thompson applied for a patent on his 'Washington Lighting Sticks.' Old Doc. Whitney was quite a guy. He practiced medicine here around the turn of the century. His logical approach to health sold quite well among the early Davenport settlers. He figured that the mop and the carpet sweepers were the worse spreader of diseases.

In an article, Dr. Whitney made this statement: "If you have a carpet sweeper, look it over and you will find it filled with hair, dust, lint, etc., and all these make it one of the best places for germs of all kinds to grow, and this is what you are sweeping your rugs and carpets with daily.

"You have a case of cholera, typhoid, diphtheria, scarlet fever, or any of the germ diseases that are deposited on the floor from patient, either from the bowels or sputa. The mop is used to take it up, and when you want to mop your kitchen or dining room, this same mop is used, so we are spreading germs of different kinds all over our floors."

It does sound yukky doesn't it? The doctor went on to say, "Would you allow your children to associate with people that had never taken a bath? Has your carpet sweeper ever had one? And still you are using this daily and letting your children associate with it. You are inhaling its dust, taking in the germs, and inviting all kinds of disease to yourself and family..."

"Take consumption for instance: how often do we see several cases in the same family stricken with the disease, one after another. I now have cases under my care that I firmly believe have been taken from the floor or carpet. Think of the eczema of the hands which the good housewife has contracted by wringing the mop.

"This winter, while thinking the subject over, I invented a mop and sweeper that you can sterilize, or boil without injuring neither floors, carpet or sweeper. You can use strong lye, or boiling water, take it all up clean and dry and wear your white kid gloves and not soil them. It will take the dirt out of every crack on the floor, and even

There were no empty gold mines there to help dry up Bluestem. Heavy wheat yields will never revive this ghost town. It's now just a place for local farmers to unload their crops. I believe the Bill Warwicks are the honorary caretakers of this once busy place.

out of the pores of the wood. Run this same cleaner back over the floor to take up all the water and dirt, no dust to inhale. You can also sweep your floor when dry. The casing of this cleaner is made of solid metal, not a seam to hide a germ; the brush is made of the best bristle attainable. It's a brush you can't injure, or scald with boiling water from your teakettle. You have it always clean. On the end is a scrub brush which by reversing the cleaner adapts itself to the floor.

"I am having a carload manufactured in Cleveland Ohio, and they will be sold by agents only. So when one calls on you treat him or her courteously, let them show you how it works, and convince yourself of its merit. They are not expensive, and I am confident no home will be without one. I have also patented the same cleaner on a larger scale for a street cleaner. It will clean a street and not a grain of dust will escape, deposit it in a large box, and when full can be dumped or emptied, wherever desired. No dust to be deposited on the sidewalks or window fronts. I have named it "The Sanitary Floor and Carpet Washer."

Even though it was a good idea, there are no records whether Dr. Whitney's scare tactics ever sold very many of his germ chasing floor and carpet washers. His super street cleaner model wasn't ever a big hit. The blowing winds kept the streets clean enough to suit most city councils.

Inventor Doctor Whitney saw most of his patients in their homes. It's been quite a spell since doctors came out to the ranch to see sick people. Early day doctors only had to toss a little black bag and a road map into their rigs. Nowadays it would be quite a chore to lug all their modern equipment around from the clinic.

The first automobile I remember seeing, was when sickness sent mother to bed. When mom refused to eat chicken soup, dad called in on our newly installed phone line, and told the doctor to come out and see what's the matter with mom.

An hour later a cloud of dust appeared as Doctor Adam drove up to the porch. He was driving a large looking, rather top-heavy car, that held his wife and a friend. After a quick visit to see mom, the doctor left the house in a hurry. Since doctors are people too, he was excited to show dad all the features his new car had. After a close inspection, the doctor took dad for a ride to Rocklyn and back.

Since we were pasturing his wife's retired saddle horse, Doc Adam and his wife extended their stay by walking out to the pasture to see her old four legged transportation. Because mom wasn't in such a hot condition, the doctor went in the house before leaving, to check her over for the second time. It was like getting two office calls for the price of one.

Home Delivery

Things were different when a lot of us older ones got born. There was no high technical equipment setting in the doctor's office. When a call came in that a baby somewhere was about to be born, all that was available for the doctor to grab, was his little brown bag and a pair of pulling hooks if it happened to be an instrument baby. Then down the country road he would go.

When I was a year and a half old, in the same bedroom where Sugar and I now spend about a third of our time, my sister was born. That blessed event of long ago happened near the spot where the Kiks now point their feet when they are asleep. Twenty four years later, sister Ethel gave birth to daughter Evelyn in the same bedroom, and I believe in the same bed that Ethel was born.

So far, Sugar has never used the birthing room.

At the tail end of harvest 51 years ago, time was approaching for me to become an uncle. When count-down started, my sister packed her things and came back to the place of her childhood days so she could make mother a midwife and grandmother at the same time.

Late that afternoon when things began looking like motherhood was approaching, mom called Doctor Sewell. The doctor hurriedly shoved down an early supper, and drove out to the farm.

Upon arriving, Sewell took charge by checking over the soon to be mother. He told Emerson, the father-to-be to keep his shirt on; that it could be quite a while before

things around here would start to happen. The atmosphere calmed down and most everyone started socializing over some coffee with the doctor.

Wednesday nights at the movie house in town were drawing nights for cash prizes. So I snuck out and went to see the movie "Wagon Wheels." After watching a lot of Indians shoot arrows at some covered wagons, I was anxious to find out if the baby had arrived. It didn't take me long to get home when the last prize was drawn.

As soon as I entered the house, I knew the baby hadn't been born yet. Emerson and the doctor were discussing past football games. The front room was stuffed with cigarette smoke. "We are still waiting," the doctor told me as he got up to check on sister.

This time Doctor Sewell didn't come out of the bedroom, instead he called the excited, soon to be father in to help administer ether. Doctor's theory was to put Ethel into semi-dreamland so she wouldn't feel all the necessary pains of the baby being born.

A lot of ether missed Ethel's nose and traveled right up into Emerson's nose. It caused future father to pass out, and he had to be helped to the upstairs bedroom.

When the clock was close to striking midnight, the voice of baby Evelyn was heard. Emerson slept soundly through it all and didn't learn 'til breakfast time that he had finally become a daddy.

Mondovi And The Zeimantz Family

There was little acknowledgement of Mondovi in that excellent Centennial Special that the Davenport Times put out in 1983. Sugar was asked if there was anything about Mondovi in the 'controversial' Centennial Cookbook. Well, very darn little. Between how to make Mennonite Chicken and Squirrel Soup, there is a paragraph on Mondovi.

Since so much has been written about Rocklyn, it's a shame Mondovi has been forsaken. After all it's the same distance from our county seat as Rocklyn is, except you got to go in a different direction.

In 1889 the railroad missed Mondovi when it was building its way to Coulee City. So the town had to be moved down to where the railroad tracks were. According to records when Mondovi became Mondovi, there were only 16 humans inside that proclaimed spot. However, when a saw mill got going the usual frontier buildings began to appear. It helped Mondovi turn into a mini town. A blacksmith shop went into business mending broken rigs and farm equipment. The chop and feed mill supplied supplemental food for a lot of animals. A well cared for cemetery is still doing business on the outskirts of what is left of this burg.

Mondovi gave me a place to be born in. Proud to say it was a decent village. Even though it had a saloon, it left no permanent effects on my dad during the time my newly married parents lived there. It had room for two churches, so you see it was a place more holier than aver-

age for a place of its size. Streiffeler, the famous old time Lincoln County preacher got his start by preaching in Mondovi's Evangelical church. Later Streiffeler became converted to the Pentecostal faith. A well known Catholic family supplied the town with lots and lots of good Catholics. It was a tough place for a heathen to survive.

Every settlement has a heritage tale of some kind to tell. Mondovi is no different than any other place. True, old time events are slanted to what one knows about the past.

So now let's start off by heading east of Mondovi for a five minute walk down railroad avenue. There to the left lived a guy by the name of George Betts. He had a farm but needed a wife, so he married my Aunt Lou. George then built a fancy home. He came from an inventive family, so built a factory like shop that was powered by the wind. Shop holidays were when the air stood still.

Having no control over a fatal illness, George Betts died, leaving behind a practically brand new wife. My aunt then picked for her second husband, a gambler and a rounder by the name of Jack Smith. Being full of faith, she had plans to reform him. Finally Auntie Lou realized husband number two had no desire to look at the hind ends of horses all day long while doing field work, so she sold the farm to my dad.

We will now drift back into Mondovi proper where in 1896, a couple by the name of John and Susan Zeimantz

contributed considerably to the population of Mondovi by raising ten children there. Eight girls and two boys, a lopsided figure that helped balance out a male dominated population.

John helped support the family by working for the Puget Sound warehouse in Mondovi, while his wife ran a boarding house on main street. During the peak season, she fed up to 20 hungry workers, family style for 25 cents a meal. Poor and unspoiled, the rapidly maturing offsprings pitched in to make survival possible. Something like the Walton family on TV.

Community life provided this town's entertainment. On Sunday afternoons the passenger train arrived from Spokane with a supply of mail and a stack of Sunday papers that sold for 5 cents. Folks would drive into town and tie up their live transportation, so they could socialize with friends and neighbors. By the time the crowd reached its usual size, the locomotive smoke could be seen in the distance.

A special event would come to this burg, when a one man traveling show, showed up. King Kennedy made annual appearances at the schoolhouse with his Punch and Judy show. King could make those rag dolls talk in a ventriloquism fashion to the amusement of bug-eyed youngsters and fun filled adults. The Zeimantz children all got free tickets to the show in exchange for supplying boarding house meals to the man that could throw his voice.

The Zeimantz teenagers were a friendly bunch. Regardless of their inherited faith, attending a Protestant church was no sweat. They got to see a cross section of life in an early day town that never grew.

Eligible bachelors came in various sizes and professions. Among the wife seekers, competition ran high for the attention of the Zeimantz girls. Even their names sounded attractive, Mary, Gertie, Irene, Sophia, Minnie, Lena, Susie, and Margaret.

Before marriage, my dad was stuck on Gertie, but events didn't jell. After marrying my mother dad forgot to take the picture of Gertie off the dresser top. Upon returning from their honeymoon, mom wanted to know what the picture signed "With Love" was all about.

Mother, coming from a tightly knitted German-Russian background felt lost in the mixed society village of Mondovi. By the time I got born, the Zeimantzes made mother feel right at home. So much so that mom hated to leave Mondovi when migration started us back to Rocklyn.

Years later, who was the first to get to see our brand new, day old 1916 model T Ford? The Zeimantz tribe. Without any driver's training, dad was able to steer the Ford to Mondovi with only two rest stops. A 13 mile non-stop trip got us back home that evening.

The passing of time has not totally wiped out the family of twelve. One of the girls, Sophia Phillips is very much alive and is still living in Mondovi.

Creston

A few years back, Creston was about to become great. The lumber mill was busy making lumber. When Washington Water Power pegged Creston as the nicest spot for making lots of electricity, news reporters came from all over, and wrote scads of articles. TV cameras arrived. Lots of interviews took place. Creston also made it possible for the Blue Sky Advocates to have a spot in history.

What happened to shatter Creston's Dreams? Well, the recession wiped out the mill. A lot of us were guilty of trying to make it rough for a steam plant to set up house-keeping at Creston. Hard times and the short-sighted ideas that we don't need more electricity 'til way in the future, may cause WWP not to open up a generating factory out here. A potential neighbor like the steam plant could be a joy to any community, and would help pay a lot of taxes.

There were various reasons why some of us opposed the coal plant. Guess I first didn't like to see our wide open space cluttered up with clusters of people. What a selfish attitude! It should be a delight to have other folks enjoy making a living in our great Northwest. Especially, since a WWP prospective electricity making machine promised to keep its nose clean by using a better grade of industrial handkerchief.

If Creston's low point on the population scale slides any lower, Deb Copenhaver's unique western establishment could be the only attraction left to remind us of by-gone days. A bleak picture? Unless Alice Chrisman's

prayerful suggestion is fulfilled that some industry, large or small, would make its home by the Butte, doomsday could arrive.

Creston should not be forced to shrink to a smaller size. This pioneer town needs to continue on to higher heights. It does have a good start, as it's the highest town in elevation between Spokane and Coulee City. All it needs is for some company to move in, and take advantage of Creston's fame. 'Made in Creston' could be an asset for any imaginative company.

Since Creston is now sweating out the status quo, let's go back to a long time ago, when our country was brand new. A guy by the name of Henry Verfurth, dragged a store building down from the Sherman district so business doors could be opened up at Creston. From 1900 on, the town grew to the size that satisfied the early settlers. It had everything. A barber shop, a newspaper, a bank, and what not. Even a head office of a mining company, that was located in the heart of down town. For a price, this company handed out mining stock certificates.

Early day Creston was a church oriented town. When competition from various faiths moved in, five churches got extra busy on Sundays. It also was the home of men that helped shoot up outlaw Harry Tracy.

Margaret Underwood wrote an excellent story about an early day family that lived at Creston. It was published in 'The Gold Historian' under the title of 'Creston Pioneers.'

Abandoned Cemetery

About three and a half miles north of Creston, on a sloping hillside, lies a three acre patch of virgin soil, bunch grass and all. Out in the middle of this wind-swept spot, early settlers buried half a dozen of their dead. There is a mid- 20th century body up there too. It was buried about 30 years ago, bringing the total among the dead to seven.

A tumble-down wood fence that was once over a grave, lies twisted off to the side. A knocked over granite plaque can be seen deep in the bunch grass near the spot of two buried children. A body of a young wife has been in the ground since 1886. A grandfather's grave is next to his three grandchildren of tender age. Off to the side of this sparsely occupied site, near a clump of rye grass, stands a hewn out stone. It probably marks the grave of an unknown body.

It appears the mourners are all gone now, and are buried elsewhere. The native grass is finally enjoying its undisturbed life as it has for eons.

A lot of history lies buried in every discarded cemetery. Some lives ended in such a short span of time. No wonder we humans like to believe in a transformation of some kind. After all, we are the only species on earth that recognizes pending death.

Even a believer in a hereafter, sometimes fails the shock test. A number of years ago, Sugar and I had the chore of letting a distant neighbor know that her brother-in-law had passed away. Having no telephone in that part of Rocklyn, we drove down. Upon telling her the tragic news, she sat down and kept repeating, "We will see him no more. He is gone forever!"

Guess the shock sometimes brings out the instinctive reality of life's permanent end. Although her sudden, fading faith may have returned later.

There are lots of ways of saying a final goodbye to a loved one. A well known retired minister told me of a funeral he once presided over, where the deceased was not put on public display. This minister has the reputation of handling problems properly. Thinking wisely, he arranged the service message by emphasizing that the deceased body is no longer his, as he is now with his Maker. Even after planting that seed in the mourner's mind, the minister was surprised when several wanted to see 'good old Joe' for the last time.

The passing of actor, Henry Fonda, brought back memories. About 50 years ago, Henry played the role of non-conformist, young Abraham Lincoln. In one touching scene, Fonda sentimentally portrayed Lincoln at the grave of his youthful sweetheart who had passed away the year before.

The cemetery was by a river. It was springtime when long-legged Abe sat up against a tree by the grave. He had a wild flower in his hand as he fantasized talking to her. Lincoln told her the spring thaws had risen the river flow once again, and that the first wild flowers were out. After telling her he wasn't doing so good without her, he kissed the flower and placed it on her grave. That scene cracked me up emotionally.

Burial spots of loved ones carry a very haunting feeling of separation. When time levels us all, grave stones will then just become records for the future generations to view.

Reviewing A Century

In June, 1985, the Klein tribe of Edwall put on a thoroughly researched program that made you think of pioneer days. It was done for those that are related to the Kleins. In the afternoon, the public was invited.

The Klein's extravaganza took place in the gym of a privately run school. Edwall has a unique situation. The community is divided into two schools of thought. You are either a Christian Heritage School believer, or you are not a Christian Heritage School believer.

The old established Methodist church is still operating in the heart of Edwall proper, for those that never had a reason to go elsewhere. The rest of the Protestant church-going population attends churches in towns that surround this burg. A habit that was developed ages ago, when different Bible following ways were the 'in thing.'

Anyway, this well designed former public school building served very well for the heritage celebration of the Klein-Rux 100th anniversary. This heritage more or less got its start when old man Kik in 1880 settled in the Sassin area. His first wife died before arriving in all that bunchgrass. Needing a second wife so he could start up another batch of kids, grandfather went around looking for a young wife. He met and married a teen-age Rux girl who was far away from home. She was working in a restaurant that fed the crew that was building the railroad into Sprague.

When the new bride, Louisa, got adjusted to a husband that saw many seasons, and a log house full of step children, she got lonesome. Not for the lack of faces, but for her family away back in Minnesota. Even with her scheduled pregnancy, Louisa, and her husband sent out an invitation to the Rux tribe to come out to Edwall.

It didn't take Louisa's family very long to accept the invitation. They sidetracked a flat car, and three box cars.



Browsing through walls of history.

then loaded them with their farm machinery, live stock, and household stuff, including the kitchen stove.

The Rux's arrival to this virgin territory put their young folks in line for future marriages to the Kleins, Bursches, and others.

The Klein story was well told by the members. It was brought out visually on the detailed family circle chart, and family tree drawings that were on one wall of the gym.

There were gobs of relatives there, but on the Kik side of the Klein tree, Mark Bell was the only one that could make it. I haven't seen Mark since he showed me San Francisco 50 years ago. He has made a successful career as a teacher in Christian education. His sister Virginia also enjoys the fruits of a good life in Palm Springs.

At noon the sponsors filled us up with a lot of good food. We were then ready for the pre-arranged trip into the past. The Kleins chartered Grayhound bus tour beat any of the Hollywood tours to the entertainment world. Sounds far out? Well, maybe, but you got to be a local history buff to understand, and have the imagination to figure how things looked around a century ago. The ancestors gave us a story by the landmarks they left. That's more impressive to me than the tinsel town tours of Hollywood.

The bus tour ran every 45 minutes from the school yard, and wound through the landmarks of the Edwall-Sassin area, with members of the Klein family moderating points of interest.

The first bus stop was where in 1880 old man Kik homesteaded. Early stories flashed through my mind, like when in 1881 grandpa harvested his first wheat crop with a cradle scythe, averaging one acre per day. Now those same rolling hills harbor huge combines that make wheat fields disappear in a matter of hours. From there, more fertile fields showed up where the four Rux sisters settled with their husbands to a life of farming. Soon the road turned, and followed the Rock Creek coulee where cattle still have to chew the pasture off with their teeth, just like long time ago.

Our second stop was at the old Sassin schoolhouse site where the Kleins drug up the old cornerstone for viewing by interested eyes. Down the road away, our next stop was at the old Sassin cemetery. Up on the hill, all by itself stands a lone mini Washington monument tombstone. It is the burial spot of an old whisky soak, Chris Deeg. For a while Chris enjoyed being the second



Telephone poles and fence posts mark spots of interest on Klein's laid out chartered bus tour.

husband of Louisa Kik. Then we viewed the rock remains of the first German Evangelical Church in the Territory of Washington. It was built in 1884 on a lonesome spot, but I guess old settlers were used to that.

Then across the coulee the bus scooted to where a better church was built. I remember that church well, as they used to invite the Rocklyn bunch to their picnics. After swinging around into some rich terrains, the bus headed for Gerald's farmstead.

The highlight there was the Klein Museum, with its family memorabilia from the beginning. It's a story in itself. The restored log cabin had a couple of live half grown girls dressed in 'Little House on the Prairie' costumes. It made you feel like you were stepping into the past.

Besides the landmarks, what's left of the relics of the past? Well, there's Irma Zellmer, although not a relic, she was one of the last teachers to teach in the Sassin schoolhouse. Irma is very much alive, and living in Davenport. A cook stove that is in the museum, came with the Ruxs from Minnesota, plus many other things. One couldn't ask for a better day to be taken into the past.

Roaming Relatives

Ever since cousin Robin Williams started to make a living by making movies of far away places, Sugar developed a traveler's itch. She secretly wishes I'd spread my territorial interests farther than just the Washington wheat fields and Lake Roosevelt. Restless Robin just loves to try to get people off their duffs to take flying trips to Europe. Sure, a lot of those foreign places are pretty to look at, because they are loaded with gobs of European history and culture.

For a set amount of dough, plus some relative privi

leges, Robin invited us to join his summer group for a two week stay in a castle. So far, I haven't developed a hankering to run over there to spend time in an ancient dungeon-like, fortified residence. It would remind me of a lot of dead kings that were a bunch of mean old guys. At one time, our ancestors idolized those overstuffed noblemen.

What's the matter with our own northwest? It would be impossible to soak up all the goodies around here that nature so pleasantly laid out for us. When a guy by the name of Henry David Thoreau just used his Walden

Pond for his inspirational poems and writings, surely Lincoln County is worth exploring for years to come

We took our traveloguing cousin out to the Rocklyn cemetery and showed him where his great-grandfather lay buried beneath the fertile soil. He thought for a while, then walked over to the edge of the cemetery hill and said, "I wonder why he settled away out here?" The answer to his question could fill scads of writing paper. If only those oldtimers would have jotted down all their dreams as they searched for new horizons.

Lincoln County fits me just fine. One of Robin's travelogues showed lots of statues of nude bodies and scads of old paintings. We have right here, rocks that Indians of long ago smeared lots of colored paint on. All this took place long before Michelangelo was born. The Indians may not have been too skillful as artists, but they had more fun playing with waterproof paints than Michelangelo did. In later life, Michelangelo was forced to paint under pressure by a lot of bigwigs.

Robin probably would lose his shirt financially, if he made a movie on the past and present of our territory. There just isn't enough evidence that our earliest day Indians whacked each other to pieces, so the excitement would be missing. It seems like our historical natives were too busy looking for camas and wild berries to take time out to make violent history.

A lot of my relatives like to travel all over the world. After looking things over, they always come back to their starting points. It came natural for Robin Williams to go wandering all over the world because his mother was in England when it was time for him to be born.

Robin's mother, Gwen is my full blown cousin and was born with itchy feet. Years ago after teaching voice expression for the privileged few, she left Los Angeles as an adventuress on a slow freight boat to Japan. It was loaded with missionaries, and lots of other stuff. After gathering some rough knowledge, Gwen started writing journals. Finally she worked her way across Siberia, then on to England where she married a guy. Then she got a job telling stories over a British radio and gave birth to Robin.

Before World War two broke out, baby Robin and his mother went to Germany. When it looked like Hitler might do a terrorist act on a huge scale, they got the heck out of there, and later settled in Laguna Beach, California. Gwen is now spending the tail end of her life selling Laguna Beach property.

Robin spent his first productive years as a tour guide on sort of a love boat that cruised the Mediterranean and other vacation spots. For the last decade he has been making travelogues in Europe, then spends part of the year showing his results to colleges around the U.S. Robin's travelogues are good. He has a way of blending history with the now world.

One of Robin's well illustrated movies we saw at Community College was on the jet set that loves to vacation in the Mediterranean where everyone looks 'cool like' and sexy. Robin has just finished showing his latest documentary film on the travels of St. Paul.

My other cousin Gladys Bohlig and her husband George have just completed a visit with us. George was

an interior decorator before retiring, and used to tell a lot of people with fancy homes what's wrong with the insides of their houses.

They had planned to go to Germany this summer to take in historical spots and visit with relatives that got stuck over in the 'old country' for all these years. But they cancelled their trip, as they were upset with the Europeans for not supporting Reagan with his sanctions against the Libyans. A sort of a two people crusade. It was no biggy for them to skip Europe this summer since they have been over there many times for business and pleasure.

Their decision to boycott was our gain. They took a month long trip to check out a lot of things in Iowa and swung around this way to see what we are doing.

The Bohligs are used to a lot of ocean scenery and hills that have been worked over to make room for elaborate homes. They live life on the biggy side and stuff like that. Since California relatives don't talk the language of the farmer, we thought it may be of interest if we took them to the place where Gldays' ancestors had to dig out a living. Through a recent letter Sugar promised Gladys a walk through the land of her mother's parents.

A week before their arrival, I made a dry run to the upper end of Sprague Lake, so I could professionally identify ancestral landmarks. But time had wiped out any trace of the farmstead that was located between pyramid type rocks. Couldn't even find a square nail from the torn down house, nor a trace of the stumps from those stately poplar trees, let alone where the barn was.

The old Ekin stock ranch had the house built right over a spring. A short pipe brought forth water to the kitchen sink by just pumping the pitcher pump handle. Full cream cans were lowered through a floor opening. Almost as good as a refrigerator, but on the wet side. Of course, I didn't figure everything would be there to show Gladys, but I surely didn't expect the spring to have disappeared.

For historical value, parts of downtown Sprague



Robin Williams

look like a semi-ghost town. It could spike up interest of by-gone days if Gladys could see the old dated buildings, etc. We just had to wait and see.

When the Bohligs arrived, cousin Trilby joined us. We spent the day on relative talk, and downing food that Sugar and sister Ethel had put together. Next day we headed for the Edwall-Sprague territory. A picnic lunch was packed to be devoured at the water's edge of Sprague Lake. But the two car caravan got separated in the dust on a road to the historical Kinschi log house.

Lost and going around in circles ate up a lot of time. The Gerald and Carol Klein's farmyard made a good

searching spot for George and I to work out from. Finally Gerald went out scouting for the lost bunch and found them wandering around a country lane. Behind schedule made us cancel the Sprague tour, so we substituted Kleins' lawn for the dreams of a lakeside picnic.

One couldn't have planned getting lost any better. It gave us more time for a slower walk through the visual past of our ancestors as we viewed Kleins' private museum, and interesting home. Even though my prepared tour fell by the wayside, it was much better than trying to show my cousin the bare grass covered spot where her grandparents once sustained life.

Accentuate The Positive

A guy that used to live in Ritzville wrote a letter to the editor, complaining that Ritzville isn't such a hot place to live. He really went sour on this wheat raising community after completing a trip here from Stockton, California to visit his father.

This fellow Charles, claims Stockton has lots more people and parks than Ritzville. (Of course it has; it's been overcrowded for years down there.) He went on by stating, "We have much more to offer to the people of all ages than Ritzville will ever have . . . We have miles of rivers, dozens of lakes, 25 show houses . . . and large churches." Then he said, "What about Ritzville? Can Ritzville ever come close to all this?"

Larger churches for larger towns, that speaks for itself. As for the 25 show houses, most of us town and country bred folks up here just happen to enjoy the comforts of home shows, via television. And save the big time city stuff for special occasions.

Being's Charles was a high school graduate of Ritzville, it's too bad he didn't get around more. We have miles upon miles of flowing rivers, some between spectacularly built dams; and creeks galore. Also we are stocked with lakes, more than the Stockton country could ever hold.

A 15 minute drive out of metropolitan Ritzville would have taken Charles to our popular Sprague Lake. There he would have found several miles of shoreline. The lake just got a cleaning job. Rarely done on such a big lake. Soon there will be lots of brand new fishes, wait-

ing for the baited hook.

I just wish I could have taken Charles on up through those long deep scenic coulees. There he would see for himself those many clear blue lakes that extend up to Dry Falls. Then I'd drive him back to south of Creston and down through the Lake Creek country. The county roads there will take you to a lot of pretty lakes that are surrounded with native grass and scent filled wild flowers. Upon getting close to those many lonely lakes, you can almost hear the call of nature to go swimming in the buff. The many ducks and other water loving birds don't mind.

Then there's that national renowned Lake Roosevelt that stretches on for endless miles, and wide enough to become an outing by just taking a ferry across it. Charles stated that gossip is on the increase up here. If so, he should have taken an afternoon off instead of listening to stuff that seems to upset him, and headed for this lake of lakes. There he could visualize what he will be missing this summer when lots of snow water fills up this huge cavity, and turns the shores into playgrounds.

I gather Charles is in his early 30's, young enough to have gotten interested in the great northwest sport of running. If only he would love Ritzville a little bit more. The Ritzville Fair Feat 'Ash Dash' is one of our better runs. These week to week runs go on 'til the return of the snow birds. About every Inland Empire town that's worth its salt has a celebration day of some kind that opens with a good run. These events give every participant a chance to feel good, and stay on the road to a stronger dose of health.

Harvest Links The Past

During the hot harvest season, we like to do our running in the morning, usually before the hard working harvest crews release their energy. Our latest 'crack of the dawn' run took us past where four combines were getting serviced by Don Schultz's charged up crew. The head combine belonged to grandpa Albert Schultz. He was busy checking his modern self-propel over, and getting it ready for another hard day of combining.

After exchanging friendly waves with the old and the new generation of harvesters, I turned to Sugar who was puffing away and said, "Say, by golly! that old timer, Schultz represents three generations of harvest workers in

that field, and look, he is still going strong."

There I was that morning, retired and doing a lot of funny things on the road, so physical rust won't set in. And out there across the road, granddaddy Schultz who saw many improvements in harvest methods, was keeping in shape by doing what all constructive farmers were doing, harvesting.

Grandpa Albert's days of reaping in the golden grain goes all the way back to the semi-primitive ways of harvesting. He grew up out there in the Lake Creek country where people had to learn to survive on the wild and woolly side. Part of the Schultz family farmed my dad's



homestead place. Wheat had to be hauled by wagon, 20 miles over rocks, through Indian burial grounds, around lakes, and finally into Harrington.

Albert Schultz's father, Christ, believed in large families. (by correct count 13 kids) Like most families of old, everybody that was old enough to work, worked. Albert got his diploma as a harvester at a tender age, when he drove header box for his dad's stationary thrashing outfit. Too young to pitch the cut grain onto the thrashing platform, Albert was allowed to take a breather, and drink some semi-cool water from a canvas water bag. When men with pitchforks finished emptying his header box, Albert drove his team back to the header to catch another load of beheaded wheat.

Manhood was fast setting in when Albert's father switched over to a horse drawn combine-harvester. This advanced thrashing system shaved labor help down to only five men. It gave Albert a chance to graduate from sack gigger, to header puncher, and finally the thrill of becoming a teamster, where he could make 27 horses stay in line to pull the 'pull' machine.

Yes, since those harvest days of old, grandpa Schultz has kept on riding and driving more advanced

harvest machinery, until now he owns a modern self-propel combine. When harvest is completed on his farm, he joins his son's harvest brigade until the last bushel is safely put away in the warehouse.

It's been a long time since grandpa left the Lake Creek country for better pickings. Lake Creek was a rough place to scratch out a living. It was full of rattlesnakes, and legendary ghosts that scared Doc. Rude off his homestead. Some horse thieves lived between the good guys, and the rock bluffs. Moonshiners were able to set up temporary camp, until it didn't pay anymore. Land baron, George Miller moved in, and practically took over Lake Creek.

Since then, some brave guys have made good investments out there. It does have its own isolated beauty that represents the past in many ways. There are still ghost, shell-like buildings that haunt from the by-gone days. While visiting with a writer recently, she figured this unique space is a good setting for some western stories. Who knows, the Lake Creek scenery that has been so familiar to the Schultzs, Bogards, Watsons, Links, and many more old timers, may be on TV screens some day.

The Year Horses Went To War

All the recent liberation that successfully took place in the Philippines, brought back a bit of local history. It was 88 years ago that we were busy as a nation liberating Cuba from Spain. While we were at it that same year, we chased the Spaniards out of the Philippines. This made us feel powerful enough to make the Philippine people wait quite a spell before giving them their first liberation.

The Spanish-American War was a short one, but it lasted long enough to get Lincoln County involved in

furnishing some horses for the U.S. Army. The purpose was to put the soldiers on horses so they could do a better job of chasing the Spaniards off the Philippine Islands. The Army figured Sprague was a good spot to find some horses tough enough to 'make out' in the Philippines.

An officer and a couple of helpers set up headquarters somewhere in Sprague and stayed around a week buying horses. They paid the same price for any cayuse whether it was middle aged or young, as long as it could

be ridden. The only other requirement was that they had to be able to be led up to the army inspector, who would walk around the cayuse. A nod meant to put the excited animal in an assigned corral for shipment.

Uncle Charley and dad were in partnership with Jack Munch on a horse ranch located along Sprague Lake. When word got out that army buyers were coming to Sprague to buy horses, Charley started consigning some of the ranchers' stray horses on a commission base. Another well known guy in the community, Bill Marco, also went out and rounded up available horses from a different location.

Charley and Marco rode their own assigned string of horses. They didn't mind getting their bodies jarred to pieces. Charley proved to be the better rider, so was able to sell more bucking horses than Marco did.

The last day that was left for buying, Charley rounded up some of Marco's rejected horses, and was allowed to run them through the corral again. The ornery ones that Charley was able to hang on to 'til he could climb off in dignity, the government bought. I'm afraid those semi-civilized horses the Army bought at Sprague that year, gave the cavalry no choice but to plow into the enemy at full speed.

Of course Charley walked off with much more dough than Marco did. This made Marco sort out some logical reasons that were appropriate to argue with Charley about. Not very nice words started passing from lips of the acquaintances. Finally Marco hit Charley on the nose hard enough to break it. Then he pulled a knife on Charley and ripped a hole in the back of his coat.

This called for court action. Charley had him arrested. At the hearing, the judge vindicated Marco for trying to butcher Charley with a knife, since there were no witnesses to the dangerous frolic that took place in a barn.

Bill Marco left Sprague for parts unknown. Then of all things! About 35 years after the Spanish-American War, Charley and Marco ran into each other face to face on a Los Angeles street. Right away Charley got pretty excited. Aunt Myra who was with him when the meeting of the bodies took place had a hard time calming Charley down. Finally Marco had a chance to ask Charley for forgiveness. He said he got religion since that trial of long ago, and was a preacher in a downtown Los Angeles mission. According to aunt Myra, all Charley had to say then was, "Well, I'll be darned."

Harry Tracy, Rocklyn's Unwanted Guest

Does anyone know about a Saint that I could write about during our centennial year? It would be more of a constructive story for the records than writing about an outlaw like Harry Tracy. I shudder when I think how desperados filled our history books. I'm told by some of my friends that we are supposed to be born stuffed with the original sin. It looks like some couldn't wiggle out of that 'so called' curse, and turned into criminals.

It was over 84 years ago that outlaw Tracy tried to pass through our territory. It did give a lot of 'good guys' the opportunity to shoot at him. When the bullets started



Many dances took place in this old building in Sprague when pop and Uncle Charley were young guys.

What was life like around Sprague when the Philippine Islands were getting a working over? As seen through my dad's eyes, Sprague had recovered from that big fire. Ranchers were busy trying to eke out a living from between the rock bluffs, and those that were farming the upper lands were doing very well. After witnessing several carloads of native horses fall into government hands, some young men figured it would be an adventure to join the Army. But when rumors got around that soldiers were dying like flies from malaria, none were known to sign up for doing a stretch in the Philippines.

However, one well known guy did join up. Our own Judge Nevins was a Spanish-American War veteran. When the Judge died, he probably was the last known veteran of that war from this area.

flying in his direction, it discouraged him so badly that he killed himself.

Yes, desperado Harry Tracy's life ended out here at Lake Creek. Not too far from the old Janett open space rodeo grounds. Ever since Tracy's death, scads of stories have been written about him.

In fact, last year Sugar got a letter from a writer in England. He wanted to know some added details about Harry Tracy. It could be that the British Isles are getting tired of Sherlock Holmes stories. Just recently, the legendary story of Tracy popped up in True West magazine.

About 32 years ago, Ronald Reagan was able to get a job presenting the TV show, Death Valley Days. It was during this time that General Electric produced their version of Harry Tracy's escapades. It was a flop as far as the truth was concerned. They had that dangerous guy Tracy wandering out of Death Valley, where all the desperados were supposed to come from. Eventually, with guns smoking all the way up to south of Creston, the big climax set in. The General Electric producers continued to manufacture more false scenes by having the Spokane County Sheriffs in on the shoot-out with Tracy. The towns of Davenport and Creston weren't nationally known enough to consider the truthful story.

Let's go back to the summer of 1902 for some condensed facts on this guy Harry Tracy. It's no use now to digest his life that landed him in the Oregon penitentiary. But while there, Tracy didn't want to serve out his prison term, so he killed a couple of guards, and took a cell mate with him. The two bad guys were successful in dodging the law. Tracy and his pal Merrill soon began getting tough. Upon entering farm houses, they announced their names. Being sadistic, the two liked to see scared settlers shake. By standards of the old west, they were very dangerous guys.

After taking a couple of saddle horses without asking, Tracy figured he could make better time if he shot his convict pal in the head, which he did. Merrill's horse could carry a lot of things Tracy needed for a successful escape.

Tracy and his horses then crossed the Cascades, and made a trail that led to the Lake Creek country. He wound up at a stock ranch that later belonged to Charley Ensor. Harry Tracy caused a lot of excitement around these parts. About everyone wanted to get in on the act.

Tracy was nothing but a cur of the lowest type, who lives a miserable and murderous life. Besides that, he was a nut. Tracy, sitting high in his saddle, led a pack horse through our exposed territory. It didn't make sense. However, it did throw the law officers off course, as they were looking in places where normal outlaws would travel, tree covered canyons, etc.

When rewards for Tracy totaled 4,000 bucks, it made him a star criminal overnight. He was on the lips of every citizen from the Pacific Ocean to the Idaho border. About everyone had a cooked up idea about what they would do if they encountered this famous outlaw.

During this Harry Tracy saga, my dad was living on a Lake Creek homestead. Dad and his partners agreed that if Tracy was to get the drop on them, they would advise the outlaw to take their white saddle horse. Dad's theory was that a white nag would make a good spotting target for the Sheriffs.

Let's go back to a Sunday afternoon on a hot day in August 1902, and focus in on the Lou Eddy stock ranch. It was located 15 miles southwest of Davenport. About four miles from this ranch, the real hero of this drama, young George Goldfinch, came upon a man camping in a sheltered high ridge. It was Tracy, but he passed himself off as a miner. The conversation drifted from weather to crops, and to asking the lad where Tracy was. Goldfinch replied that he heard Tracy was supposed to be in the Wilbur area. Tracy then told Goldfinch he was Tracy.



Historical buffs examining Tracy's rock. No bullets or blood stains spots were found.

With a revolver strapped to his hips, and a rifle laying across a pack horse, Tracy asked Goldfinch to lead him to the Eddy ranch. Upon arriving, Tracy made bondage of ranch owners, Lou and Gene Eddy, also Goldfinch. He forced the three to go into a small field to cut hay for his hungry horses. Tracy's plans were to stay a little while to do some resting up.

When darkness set in, Tracy made Lou Eddy fix his revolver holster, and mend his gun belt. Afterwards, he shaved, took a bath, and was Eddy's uninvited guest for supper. Tracy's right hand was always less than half an arm's length from his six shooter. When beddy-time came, Tracy let Goldfinch depart with a warning he would find the two Eddys stiff, if he told anyone of his whereabouts.

When the lad arrived at the Blenz ranch where he had a job, he told his boss the hair-raising story and asked what to do. But Blenz was too stunned to get involved. So Monday morning, Goldfinch returned to the Eddy ranch on the pretense that he had left a letter there that needed mailing. Goldfinch was quizzed by the bad man who wanted to know where the sheriffs were. The lad replied he didn't know.

Goldfinch again was allowed by Tracy to return back to his place of employment with the same threat that he would make rigor-mortis set in on the Eddy brothers if he squealed. The next morning, the lad by himself went to Creston, and sent a telegraph to Sheriff Gardner and asked the operator not to make it public. But a man by the name of Morrison who was in the office at the time, spread the classified news to the Creston citizens who got excited and made a group into a posse.

It was Tuesday late in the afternoon when the Creston posse came into view of the Eddy ranch. Tracy was relaxed enough to put himself to some constructive work by installing a track on the barn door. He looked up and asked Eddy "Who are those men with guns?" For the first time, fright set in on Tracy. He sprang behind a team of horses that Lou Eddy was leading, and told him to lead the horses into the barn, where he picked up more shooting equipment. Tracy then jumped out of the barn, and kept jumping from one rock bluff to another, as the gun battle began.

In the meantime, young Goldfinch made an

appointment with Marshal O'Farrell from Davenport to meet him at Telford. From there the two left for Tracy country, to see what they could do about the situation. When they got to the Eddy ranch, to their surprise, guns had already been blazing away at Tracy. Sheriff Gardner arrived much later. He was able to get one shot out of his pistol in the direction of Tracy, thus making him also a candidate for the reward. Later that evening a shot from Tracy's gun took him out of this world. Yet no one dared to go down to check on Tracy's condition 'til morning, as he could have been playing possum.

When Tracy was pronounced dead, about every guy that was standing around with a gun in hand, hankered for part of the reward. It was Sheriff Gardner who hauled Tracy's body back to Davenport. Not a publicity seeking citizen who later claimed he brought Tracy back, and stated he had to fight off souvenir hunters, when they tried to strip Tracy's body naked.

At Davenport, the coroner appointed part of the Creston posse to escort the dead outlaw back to Salem, Oregon, and to collect the reward. This caused Sheriff Gardner to see red. He stated he himself was going to

take what was left of Tracy back to Salem. Then the Creston men said some threatening words. To prevent a second battle over Tracy, the sheriff gave in.

But when the Creston men arrived at Salem, Gardner got in his punches by sending a message to Salem, telling the authorities not to pay those body escorting guys any money.

Later the reward money was settled in the courts. Because the sheriff and the marshal got there too late to do much damage, the courts awarded the reward to the Creston gang.

Young Goldfinch should have received the reward. This lad was betrayed from the start. He was the one that turned Tracy's whereabouts in by telegraphing Sheriff Gardner from Creston, and told the operator to keep it a secret. But a guy listening in at the telegraph office turned into spy, and did a Paul Revere at Creston.

It seems to be true, the bad guys like Harry Tracy make the big time history. But the good guys like this teenage Goldfinch were just an annoyance to the reward hunters, and the publicity seekers.

The Ghost Of Harry Tracy

Thinking back to the early day guys that got into trouble, one can't help but feel sorry for our long time deceased Wild Goose Bill. He was the expansion developer of early Lincoln County, yet he couldn't handle his own frustrations. Bill was pushing 60, and had the feeling of being burned out. He couldn't stand seeing his built-in lady friend dumping him for a more charged up youth. As most of you know, old Wild Goose killed what he thought was his girl friend's side kick lover, and he died on the spot for his evil deed.

Then there was an early day 'wind bag', known as "Death on the Trail." After a brush with the law, he moved back to Davenport. Old Death on the Trail continued to brag how he shot tons of Indians, and piled their bodies up like cord wood alongside his trail. He claimed the government rewarded him for cleaning out all the hostile redskins that were hiding in the Dakota badlands.

About the same time, a couple of characters who claimed they were cousins of Jesse James, settled out here at Rocklyn. The two bachelor brothers had the habit of telling how tough they were. But, inherited dangerous blood flowing through their veins didn't seem to scare anybody.

One thing, Lincoln County did have the honor of destroying, was a choice wild west criminal. It's interesting to note why we as human beings make a big deal out of dead desperados. I suppose eulogizing famous murderers of the past releases a desire to relive western shoot-outs.

The time was ripe on July 25, 1984, when we got together as a group, and spiritually revived the best murder that could be dug up, old Harry Tracy. Us Tracy cults got off to a good start that afternoon when the National Association for Outlaws and Lawmen History came out from Spokane and headed for "Tracy Rock."

The scene out in Tracy country last week was quite

different than it was in August of 1902. That summer day as the sun was heading west, a posse on horses from Creston was headed south. With guns in their hands, and pockets full of bullets, they fully intended to do harm to Harry Tracy if he didn't freeze in his tracks.

Now, 84 years later, on the same trail the posse took, a 10 wheel charter bus was snaking its way to the



84 years later, Tracy cults arriving at Tracy's last stand.

rock that Tracy made famous. The palace on wheels was loaded with western history minded people from states as far away as Connecticut.

Four cars loaded with curiosity seekers followed this chartered rig. It was like making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The highlight came when we all got out and stared at Tracy's rock for a spell. Finally, alongside this rock, Everett Cole gave quite a talk about the final hours of Tracy's life.

Among the dignitaries that climbed up to Tracy's rock was editor Jim Dullenty of True West, and Old West

magazines. Milton Perry, superintendent of Jesse and Frank James Home Foundation of Kearny, Missouri. Western author Kathryn Wright of Billings, Montana, and Martin Kove who plays in T.V. series, "Cagney and Lacey." The locals were more interested in Martin Kove, the actor, than in Tracy's rock.

This famous spot is now under the watchful eyes of cattleman, Everett Cole and family. The scenery out there is still the same as it was when Tracy bit the dust. Except for the distant noise of an airplane and power

poles to the south, Tracy's ghost still feels very much at home out there. The barley patch of old is now growing oats. That long bluff where the posse of long ago took pot shots at Tracy is made out of lava by nature, and still seems to be well preserved.

Except for the still intact, lovely scenery and the wearing of cowboy hats, the old west is fast dying out around here. Since we have practically exposed all the criminals of long ago, how about filling in the cracks of history with stuff that really made our territory what it is?

Egypt Celebrates

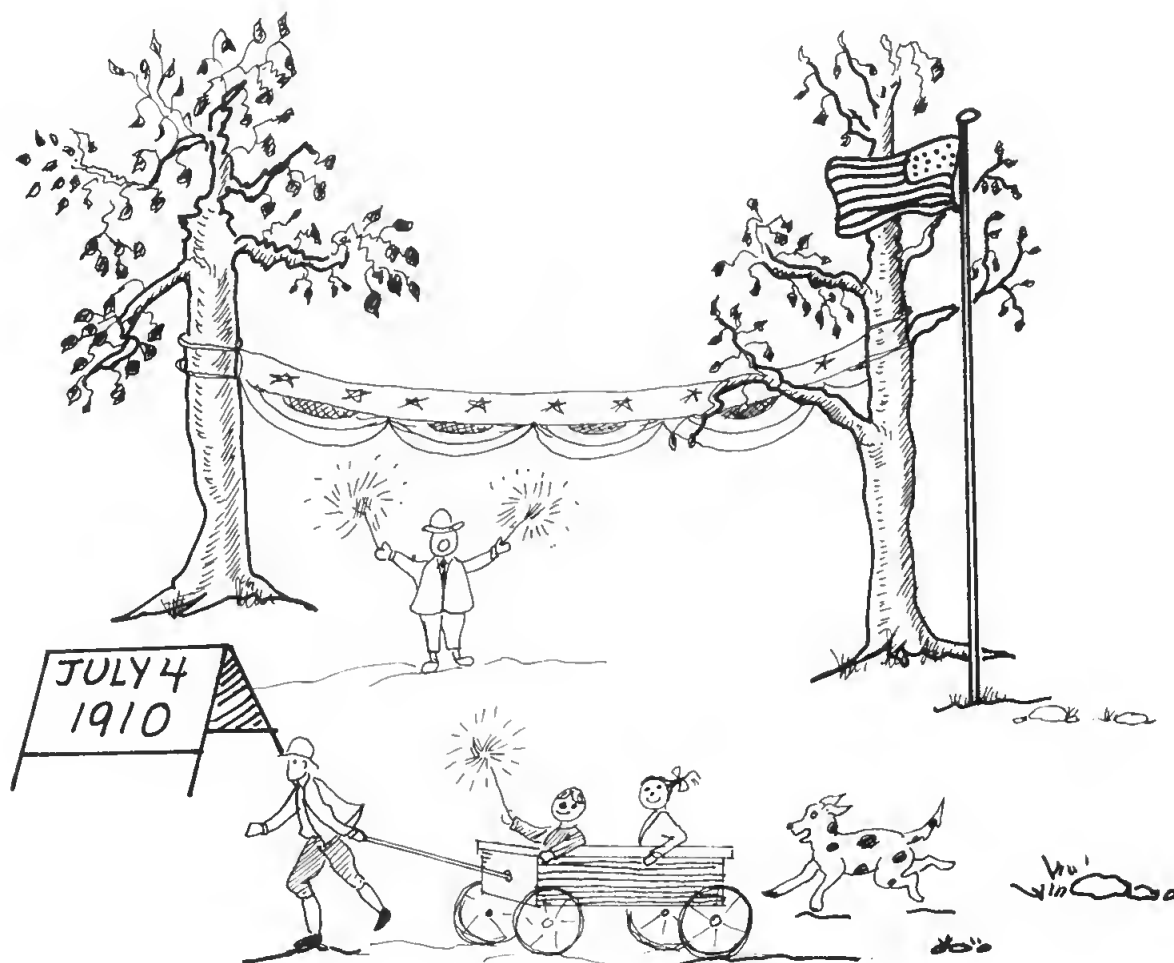
On the road to Fort Spokane, Porcupine Bay, and all points north, the road goes right by a tule laden swamp. It's located just south of the old North Star Grange hall. Can you imagine that 76 years ago this Independence Day 1910 that nearly 2000 early settlers gathered around this watering hole?

Many times on our summer outings, I would point out to Sugar and friends that this frog pond was where I spent my first 4th of July celebration. Since I hadn't reached my first birthday, naturally I didn't remember a darn thing that day. I suppose I was more interested in my mother's milk supply, and getting dirt wiped out of my eyes. It was a long dusty buggy ride that my folks took me on.

My dad didn't realize what an advanced era we lived in at that time, 'til he attended that Egypt celebration. He told me how the Jeffries-Johnson championship fight was reported within minutes from Reno, Nevada.

How was it possible in those pioneer days when the words, radio and T.V. didn't ring a bell? Well, it was telegraphed from Reno to the Davenport depot. From there the railroad agent would report each fighting round over two telephones that were nailed in different locations on trees. Two receiver listeners would then shout out the results. It could have been the first outdoor stereo sound system. Truly, it was a big deal for those days.

I have written a report on what happened that day.



July 4, 1910, as seen through the eyes of a Lincoln County Times reporter: "Last Monday was an ideal Fourth of July, all that the small boy, the big boy with his best girl, or the parents could wish. It was warm enough for the lemonade and pop vendors to do a thriving business and for all concerned to seek the friendly shade.

"Hundreds attended the Egypt celebration in the pine forest on the banks of Inkster's lake about twelve miles north of Davenport. Shortly after six o'clock in the morning the teams began wending their way toward the pleasure grounds. They were loaded with happy people and each supplied with a bounteous picnic dinner.

"The writer in company with County Surveyor Reed and Sheriff Level left Davenport just before ten o'clock, by auto. It was a beautiful ride, albeit the dust was very dusty and very deep.

"Arriving on the grounds we found an ideal spot for such a celebration. There was a goodly crowd already there and they kept coming from East, West, North and South until there was from 1500 to 2000 jolly, hot and dusty people on the grounds.

"The Egypt cornet band and a mixed chorus furnished instrumental and vocal music for the occasion and all did well, as the hearty hand-clapping at each rendition attested.

"The two orators of the occasion, James Freece and Fritz Baske, two of Davenport's young attorneys, were star attractions. We were truly proud of them. These young men handled the almost threadbare subject in new and novel lines and held the closest attention of all who could possibly get within reach of their voices. The song by the little girls of Egypt, "The Red, White and Blue," was splendidly rendered and highly cheered.

"We were introduced to many of the old settlers of Egypt and vicinity and especially from J.S. Frans, the first settler did we learn of the trials, tribulations, privations

and final triumphs of those hardy pioneers who blazed the way to this garden spot of Eastern Washington.

"The grounds are owned by J. J. Inkster of Davenport, former sheriff. His father, St. Clair Inkster, who, although nearly 79 years of age, was on the grounds all day, the jolliest and spryest old Scotchman to be found in the Inland Empire. Another of the happy crowd whom we were pleased to meet was Simon Reinbold, one of the early and now highly prosperous citizens of that section.

"As the noon hour arrived we couldn't resist the pressing invitation of Mrs. W. B. Brockman and her husband to take dinner with their interesting family. They had their ample store of good things spread out so close to that of Jack and Charley Moore and families that we may have 'got over the line' occasionally which was wholly unnecessary, for everything set before us by Mrs. Brockman, from the fried spring chicken to the cherry pie was tempting and in abundance.

"The ball game between Egypt and Larene was witnessed by an enthusiastic crowd of fans. The Larene team came off victors . . . The tug of war between the Egypt and Davenport teams was closely contested and fairly won by the 'Egypt heavies.'

"There were a number of foot races and other sports indulged in. Talk about the wild and woolly west and the inconveniences of this remote section, why away out there in the pine forest, twelve miles from town, a telephone instrument was nailed to a tree and the great Jeffries-Johnson fight was reported to us round after round. Even over on the ball grounds a phone reported the fight just the same.

"Never have we been allowed to mingle in a more orderly and good-natured crowd. During the entire day and evening not a cross word was spoken and everybody went home happy and grateful to all who had instigated and carried forward to a successful termination this model celebration."

Speedball, The Lonely Cowboy

During the turn of the century, there lived a guy in his twenties that made his home where he could find an outdoor job. His circle of operations was around the Harrington country. He answered by the name of 'Speedball,' but letters he had written arrived under the name of Wes McCann. I guess Speedball could have been called a cowboy by trade. He really was no speedball, and usually would end up breaking even financially by the end of the year.

How did Speedball get started accumulating what earthly possessions he ever owned? Well, his makeup left him wide open for a shrewd guy and horse trader like Willis Thorp, who migrated up to the Lake Creek country from Ellenburg. He had a string of Ben Snipe's ancestral ponies with him. Snipe at one time was a well known early day cattleman, and all around big shot. Any of Snipe's riding stock whether real or fraud, usually brought a premium price.

Before hiring Speedball to herd his saleable horses in all that lush Lake Creek grass, Willis sold him a high priced horse that had some of Ben Snipe's breeding stock

flowing in its veins. Also a used, hand stamped saddle that saw many a cowboy's fanny, and a fiddle that was supposed to have been made out of a special kind of wood. Willis also threw in a couple of personally conducted violin lessons.

My dad told me that Speedball did his job best when the job required his horse. He ate, lived and slept for the love of his horse and saddle. In fact he once dreamed that his saddle was stolen. After that nightmare, Speedball almost became obsessed that someone would steal his fancy riding seat.

Horse trader Willis Thorp had Speedball sewed up for over a year as his boy Friday, by selling all this stuff to him on credit. Not only that, Speedball had to use his debt ridden horse and saddle for his daily horse riding chore for Willis. He did however, get all the sour dough biscuits and bacon he could eat. Mr. Thorp and Speedball made their headquarters at the Kik brothers ranch.

Cowboys usually got their evenings off. This gave Speedball time to listen in on an after supper bachelor's bull session. Naturally, women entered the conversation.



Speedy's ears picked up the information that over the ridge lives a homesteader that had a grown teen aged daughter, who's mother had gone to the great beyond. It made this girl Anna half an orphan. Her daily chore was caring for her younger brothers.

Starved for the sight of a pretty girl, Speedball asked dad if he wouldn't mind going with him to Anna's place and introduce him. Then to stick around a while and help him josh with this young lady.

Rain the next evening didn't dampen Speedball's enthusiasm for wanting to meet Anna. The two rode over and tied up their transportation by the watering trough, then Speedball parked his ever present fiddle on the woodpile in case it was needed for entertainment.

A tongue tied cowboy made getting acquainted with dad's neighbor quite a chore. Dad said Speedball had the habit of just grinning a lot when the opposite sex was around. This time was no exception when Anna made her presence in the front room that night. To show his protegee off, dad suggested that Speedball go out and get his fiddle, and play some music.

Speedball sprang up before dad finished his suggestion, and headed for the woodpile. But the rare wood in Speedball's fiddle was too rain drenched for the music to come out right. The 'Irish Washer Woman' sounded worse than it was supposed to.

On the way back to dad's place, Speedball didn't comment about Anna 'til they parked their horses in the barn. Then he said, "Anna is pretty, isn't she?"

Dreams of the Lake Creek Anna faded from Speedball's mind suddenly when Johnnie Engle, a big shot farmer from the Harrington district arrived on the scene. Engle took what was left of Thorp's highly promoted riding horses. Speedball went with the deal.

Speedball could write better than he could talk. Dad received a total of two letters from him at his new location. He was lonesome for the lakes, and the scenic coulees of the Lake Creek country. It was a place where a simple cowboy didn't have to give an account for each day of work. If one of Thorp's horses couldn't have been found, there was always another day for riding in search of that wandering horse.

He just hated riding a plow all day, and looking at the rear ends of a string of mules. There were two other guys doing the same thing in that same field. On the bright side, the daily dollar he earned did give him the feeling that some day he would be independent. He was all debt free, and was the legal owner of an aging horse, a well worn saddle, and a fiddle he lost interest in.

Speedball also stated he wasn't as bashful as he used to be, and his social life had brightened up some too. He had just been to the Fourth of July dance at Bluestem, and he got to dance twice with a pretty girl.

A Black Man's Story

Once upon a time, way down south, a black boy was born. He was named George. His parents were slaves, who had to work for nothing, with no hope of advancement 'til Mr. Lincoln came along.

When George got to be a young lad, he hitch-hiked a ride with the Jack Adams family, who befriended him. The Adams were leaving Dixie Land and didn't perman-

ently stop 'til they found the little old Rocklyn country.

Before the country learned to respect the black man, he was called Nigger George. Much later in life, he was known as George Adams.

The virgin ground of Rocklyn and the scab rock lands to the west, satisfied Jack Adams enough to start up a farm. George worked for the family 'til death put his

boss out of circulation. He held the title of being the only black citizen in Lincoln County, and to my knowledge he held that record 'til his death in 1965.

What kind of a guy was 'good old George?' Well, when he met anyone around the Mielke and Maurer territory, he usually would have a treat or a present for them. George was a fellow that adjusted to white man's superior thinking very well. A hard worker, with a polite and gentle make-up, George never asked to be equal. However, he took some abuse from a few southerners that settled in the Bluestem, Rocklyn territory. For example:

Out in the Lake Creek country, an early settler by the name of Grant invited my dad and his brother Charley over for a visit and dinner. George Adams happened to horseback it over to the Kik place about the same time the boys were leaving for the Grants' homestead. They asked the black lad to join them for a visit with the neighbors.

Homesteading news and cowboy talk with the Grants went smoothly 'til supper time arrived. George was told by Grant that he would have to eat out in the kitchen. Uncle Charley was sort of a hot-head and Grant's statement caused his head to get hotter. He grabbed Grant by the shirt collar and said, "If George isn't good enough to eat with us, we are leaving." Then Charley shoved him off his feet. All visitation ceased because the visitors walked out the door.

A friendship was lost, but stronger bonds were gained between the three as they rode their horses back to the starting point.

George's boss Jack had a prized Jackass that helped

make the mule population grow. George loved to work with mules. He soon became known as the best mule skinner north of Harrington. For years, running the farm without George was a no-no. When the Adams estate was in limbo, George took over the farm operations, and also cared for a pasture full of cattle.

With his boss gone to his reward, George soon left for the tall timber of Lincoln County. Milton Reinbold told me that George found employment on his dad's farm. The family also found him to be a good worker, a nice and gentle person. "He never lost his temper," Milton said. After five years with the Reinbolds, age put George on the shelf.

Retirement found George living in an old house down at Miles. He was a guy that never let money get piled very high. When his welfare check arrived, he would take a short walk to a small store, and treat all his friends that were standing around to some beer. Before returning to his little old house, George would lay in a supply of victuals (vittles) that would last him 'til his next life sustaining check arrived.

Before George's death, dad wanted to be taken down to Miles for a visit with his old Lake Creek pal. Rattling George's half open door brought silence, so we walked in. Windows were scarce in the old unpainted room, making it hard to find dad's old black friend. We finally found him snoozing in a rocking chair next to a blackened stove. His response was slow, but he recognized dad. He answered our questions with a smile. But it disturbed dad, as he was just a shell of his former self. About a year later, George was buried in a pauper's grave in Davenport.

Early Day Druggist

Let's turn back the calendar to 1902. That year in the town of Norfolk, Nebraska, spring was too far away to do any damage to the snow. Just the right time of the year for folks in that mid western town to talk over their expanding migrating urge.

A group, for reasons of its own, got antsy enough to rent a railroad car to go farther west. Destination? Davenport, Washington.

The human cargo included a 10 year old lad by the name of Paul Maskenthine. Also his parents, three brothers and a sister. The William Guhlke family, and the Mateesn clan.

When that special car loaded with immigrants from Nebraska pulled into Davenport, advanced settler and scout Albert Guhlke was there with his bobsled to meet them.

The new arrivals were sledged across the barren wintery hills to the Bluestem General Store. For a treat, Albert bought all the little ones a sack that was filled with jaw breaking candy. The horses then pulled this sled full of newcomers to Guhlke's little house that stood on what used to be prairie sod.

That night, Albert's wife lined all the new arrivals along the wall for sleeping purposes.

The next morning, Mr. Guhlke took the Masken-



Anna and Paul Maskenthine at the beginning of their married life.

thine tribe to Edwall, where they caught the Great Northern to Odessa. To save a lot of walking, a delivery team was hired to take them to relatives. They had already set up a farm out in the sticks between Odessa and Wilbur.

When spring arrived, Paul's dad, Herman, went back to the Davenport area. Between Davenport and Rocklyn Herman was able to find a disgruntled homesteader that didn't mind selling out to him. This farmstead came with four horses, and a wagon. Just what papa Maskenthine needed to move his family back from Odessa.

With the passing of time, Paul was able to go to school in Davenport, and be available for a part time job. About the same time, two brothers came to town, and each opened up a drug store of their own. One was known as bad seed Ben, the other as good seed Curley. Paul got his first job after school at Ben's place.

In those days, every student had to buy their own school books and supplies. Selling books and exchanging patented medicine for money, gave Paul his first experience in the business world. He enjoyed waiting on customers.

Finally Paul moseyed over to see Ed Imus, the banker, about taking a pharmaceutical course. Imus told him he was making a darn good move.

Paul's drug store job at Ben's came to a sudden end. His boss didn't walk a very straight and righteous path. Prosecuting attorney, Pettijohn told Paul's dad to get his son out of there because they were going to raid the store, and pick up Ben for bootlegging liquor to thirsty customers.

Ben pleaded guilty when the law caught him red-handed. For punishment, he was made to set in jail for quite a while. After getting back into circulation, Ben sold out and left town.

For Paul Maskenthine, it was a matter of transferring himself over to Curley's place as a part time druggist.

Curley did serve the early day community very well with his friendly and likeable way of pleasing customers. Some depended on Curley to keep them in good health. Even to the extent of a little under the counter stuff. He had a certain kind of slickness that didn't cause him too much sweat.

When World War One came to a settlement, Earl Rambo, a high school classmate of Paul, opened up a drug store down the street a ways. One day Earl came up to Curley's place and told Paul, "Say, I'd like to have you work permanently for me down at my place." Paul said, "Oh I don't know, I'm kind of a rancher, and you have all this fancy town trade." Earl insisted and got Paul to say, "Tell you what I'll do. I'll go out and harvest with dad, then I will work for you."

That fall about Lincoln County Fair time, Earl Rambo was given license to operate a liquor department. Every boozier had to have a liquor permit, which ended all past shady deals.

It was the first day of the Fair when Paul went to work. "I was literally fastened to the counter writing liquor permits that day," Paul told me.

When the liquor drinking guys tapered off to a less



In 1909 Paul's dad, Herman, and Jahn Buck took a trip to Seattle and had their picture taken. It was sent back to their families with a simple question asked, "We are in Seattle what do you think of us?"

frantic flow, Paul stated, "I really liked it there. You were up where you kinda met the people. High school kids would come down at noon to get a doughnut at the bakery, then come in to the soda fountain side of the drug store, and get a soda and talk about football and basketball and other goings on up at the school. It was like a daily gathering of friends."

Paul Maskenthine's drug store sojourn lasted well into the time when Germany took its last crack at trying to lick the world. Paul gradually tapered off his long years as a druggist, and farmer, when Everett Brooks took over ownership of Rambo's Drug Store.

The two sides of Paul's life were busy ones. A spring morning found him guiding a row of horses behind a seeder. The next day he could be appearing behind a drug store counter.

Paul's farm life took him through all the evolutionary stages of farm equipment. From the heading and thrashing outfits, on up to the modern combines. Punching header at a young age, he had to match his skill with the more weather beaten, mustachioed, seasoned crew.

It was a pleasure to get down to the nitty gritty of by gone days with Paul the other day. Right after World War One, events made it possible for him to marry Anna, his sweetheart of many years. Their marriage brought forth two country bred daughters, Eleanor and Irene.

When they were newlyweds, they had a helping hand in that railroad drama, when Tanner's bull butted the eastbound passenger locomotive into the ditch. On the way to church that morning, they picked up the engineer who was hitch hiking into Davenport.

We got to reminiscing about his dad, Herman, who after surviving a bank failure, was able to hold on to land he bought at inflated prices.

Some of the early day settlers took time out to help build better roads. Wandering travelers didn't like to cross wide creeks, and canyons, so highway two went in every direction on its way west. Parts of the straightening out job was taken care of by the grandad of Judge Zellmer and Paul's father.

The two old timers built a bridge over the creek, so the wagon wheels wouldn't get wet or mire down. Then they made an "S" grade to relieve horses from staining a gut when they tried to pull their load out of the canyon floor.

Telephone lines being built were like a chain reaction. When the line got to the Maskenthines', another farmer would nail two by fours onto the fence posts to hold a single wire to his place. The 'follow the leader' line ended south of Rocklyn.

For four bucks a year from each telephone, a line exchange lady was hired in Davenport. This made it possible to tune in on settlers far beyond the horizon.

Rocklyn Telford Rodeo

Recently I visited with a retired couple that love to tour out-of-the way places. Their specialty is ghost towns, and old mining holes that were dug out by obsessed men looking for a quick cure from poverty. They figured that forgotten wagon trails should be studied and written up.

I guess they are right. There are still heaps of things worth recording right here in our back yard. For instance, there were some events that took place years ago that didn't leave any artifacts laying around.

How many of you with wrinkled skins remember the open space rodeo that was held in the middle of the vast grazing lands of Lincoln County? It was in August and the year was 1925. If you recall, it was a free rodeo. All the riders collected were sore butts.

That summer, dad and I drove up from Calif. to see if our renter raised any wheat. For a couple of Sundays, it gave us the opportunity to watch the cowboys go sailing through the air. This wild sort of stuff took place west of Rocklyn and south of Telford. It was out on the old Janett pasture.

Wade West was the foreman for the Janett brothers pasture holdings. Wade rounded up all the cowboys and bucking horses he could find. This made it possible for the guys to have some cowboy fun and drink a little moonshine whiskey.

That big pie-shaped oasis out in the middle of nowhere was ideal for such goings-on. The rocks were miss-

When I was getting ready to leave, Paul said, "I will be 93 in August. After I retired, my wife and I enjoyed this new home we built here in town. Anna loved flowers, and she made our yard beautiful." When I got to the door Paul stated, "I spent 57 years with Anna. She is gone now." He pointed to the center of the room and added, "Anna used to sit in a chair over there, and we would watch television together."

It's just a question of who goes first, and who is the one left alone with memories. There is a recorded song that sort of breaks me up: "Honey I Miss You So." (At this writing, Sept. 1986, Paul is very much alive at the Davenport Nursing Home.)

ing and the grass was soft enough to cradle a departed cowboy that was on his way to a lower level. A small house and a few sheds stood up along side a row of pasture bluffs. A 'moonshine still' was in hiding. Only Wade West and some of his cowboy disciples knew where it was.

That first advertised Sunday, right after the noon hour, about 200 cars began coming in from a couple of rutted trails. Guys with chaps on made us park our rigs on the outside of this grassy flat. The old cars made a good barrier to scare the frightened animals back to the bluffs.

Who attended this opening event? Well a lot of neighbors, friends, strangers, grandparents, daddies and quite a few mommies. A set of little twins were seen laying in the back seat of a car. Their daddy, Oby Smith, was one of the cowboys that helped retrieve riderless horses that high tailed it over the bluffs.

In the middle of the bucking matches, deputy sheriffs Cecil Fisher and 'Dutch' Van Hook drove up in a dusty looking car. They snooped around for quite a while, but didn't find the liquor still. Later, they joined the large crowd by sitting on car fenders, watching the horses trying to get rid of their passengers.

During intermission, some of the more worldly cowboys formed a huddle and told some X-rated stories. During the rest period, some of the riders strayed over to the circle of cars for a visit, and to answer rodeo questions. When recess ended, a couple of guys on horses



Rocklyn-Telford Rodeo. Circle of cars prevented riderless horses from escaping.

rode around fast like, kicking up dust. It was a signal for the riders to get back to the corral for more fun and punishment.

There was no squeeze like slot to sandwich the bouncing broncos in for mounting. The riders used no saddles. They just jumped on the nervous nags from the side of the corral and tried to locate enough horse hair to hold on to. Fortunately none of the cowboys got hurt. All they had for first aid was a snake bite kit, and buckets of water. No loud speakers to announce in a glorified way

who the riders were that fell off or stayed on. If you didn't know, word of mouth did the trick.

Years later, when the Mielke brothers had the say-so of this spread of pasture, I looked over that semi-wild west bucking match spot of long ago. With the slugs of people and the circle of old time cars all gone, it was a mighty empty spot of grass. Cattle and horses still leave the same kind of tracks as they did then. Generations of livestock have chewed down that grassy flat hundreds of times since those summer rodeo days of long ago.

Grange Days

Our space age country life has knocked some of the steam out of the Grange. New type farm organizations that are now busy helping farmers with their problems, weren't around 50 years ago.

After all these years, the Grange has failed to modernize their house rules. Still there are lots of dear friends that love the pageantry of ritualism, and maybe that should be considered. To me the secret order of the Grange was out of date soon after old daddy Granger got his Order organized. I go through the ritual workout with a straight face, but I've been a hypocrite all during my 50 years of Grange life. I hope the Grange doesn't throw me out, as I would feel lonesome.

Sure a bouncer may be needed at the outer gate to kick out the undesirables. Who knows? On rare occasion, a wandering bum could sneak in, and disrupt the meeting. Except for military spy operations, the password has lost its reason to survive.

By discarding the petty things, it all boils down to the good the Grange has done. It has not only supplied the majority of country entertainment in its hey day, it had control over the farmers' problems by voicing their opinions and doing something about it. For a long time, Grange Co-ops purchasing muscle gave members a better price tag on things needed for farming. It's still a very practical, and handy place for farm supplies.

It was a surprise to me that Grangers in Southern Calif. became quite active after I left that highly promoted spot. Even old Walt Knott joined the Order. It was interesting to note that the Grange Sugar and I visited while there, was made up of retired folks that were living off the fat of their salted away income. So when meeting time rolled around, there was no farm problems to discuss. Time was mostly spent opening, and closing the meeting so they could socialize. I was told that once in a while a powerful speaker would come, and tell this group a lot of things.

Anyone around my age can't help but think back to those old Grange hall days when dances, and other social things were on the main calendar of events. Since Grange dancing has now gone the way of the Edsels, a lot of these well preserved Grange halls sound pretty empty, except for some rambling around once or twice a month by loyal Grange members.

To revive some of the Grange community activity of the past, why not consider having your first or your next wedding in a Grange hall? You can then have the country atmosphere of a real farm like wedding.

But you will not be the first in the state to try out a Grange wedding. According to the Wash. State Grange records, Telford had the first. Well over 40 years ago, a young immigrant from North Dakota, Jack Schneider had a lot in common with a native lassie, Georgia Cabe. When they developed a craving for each other, they wanted to get married in the smoothest way possible. So to eliminate the stress of city weddings, this youthful couple picked the Wilson Grange hall.

They decided to free themselves of the headache of who to invite to their wedding. So the mother of the future bride announced at Grange that everyone from far and near was invited to come, and see her daughter get married to this Dakota guy.

News soon spread like wildfire of the coming June wedding. Home economic chairman, Maggie Knack beat it up to the mountains to pick lots of Bridal Wreath flowers, while Sadie Maurer with excited helpers, dove in and decorated the hall pretty like. Rev. Ernie Mitchel, a preacher from Creston was rounded up.

Around 200 showed up for this bash. More volunteers turned in their skills as the need arose. Hazel Hall's piano playing took over the wedding march, and other musical sounds. Sugar, Devore Cabe, and the bride's mother Marie, sang out loud, 'I Love You Truly.' Elsie Ganes stood on one side of the marrying couple, while Harry Schneider stood on the other side.

When the preacher finished doing his legal stuff, everybody congratulated the couple while self appointed ushers moved the benches off the floor, so the wedding dance could get started. Volunteer musicians made up the orchestra. A feast like lunch was served, Grange style.

Was the marriage a success? Well the union produced four kids that gave them four grandchildren. Several years ago, we received this invitation: "A celebration of love, joy and marriage is planned for the fortieth wedding anniversary of Jack and Georgia Schneider. Their children and grandchildren invite you to celebrate with them . . . Your presence is gift enough."

Memory Dancing

One morning when Sugar's eyes popped open, instead of saying, "How's my honey," she told me she just got through dreaming that she was dancing with Howard Janett. Golly, it's been ages since those old dances took place. Sugar's sub-conscious memory clock must be starting to recycle.

We used to dance our legs off about every Saturday night. It all began when I introduced Sugar to the dance floor. In those pre-war, war, and post-war days, nearly every Grange hall kept their floors smeared with slippery wax to help out those with lead feet.

As far as the rural district was concerned, community dancing was as American as apple pie. It was a romantic, and sometimes not such a romantic era, especially when your heart throb chose to dance the last waltz with a competitor. But for some of us that had found our mates, it was a tuneful way to socialize with friends and neighbors. Guess that's why Sugar, the other night, got to dreaming about one of her old dance partners. As a young married teenager, it was a thrill to be accepted as part of the established community.

Looking back, we did have a lot of fun. It was early in Sugar's new life when she and the Knack girls thought it would be neat to throw a harvest dance at Telford. Articles were taken out of barns like bales of hay, harnesses, lanterns, saddles, and old wagon wheels. Those barn yard articles were placed throughout the Grange hall. A talented Grange orchestra from south of Wilbur supplied a mixture of barn dance, and harvest moon music. Two of the dance sponsors eventually married a couple of ranch hands that attended that authentic barn dance.

During the hay-day of Grange dances, a lot of local big name orchestras were playing throughout Lincoln County. To the north and east of Davenport was the well known Rux brothers orchestra, featuring the king of the saxophone, Virgil. The other orchestra working the Grange circuit was the McDougals, with Jack hot on the drums.

Sweet Music Of The Past

One day while visiting along the halls of the Lincoln Nursing Home in Davenport, familiar music from a saxophone started coming from the recreation area. It was the sound of an old waltz that I used to dance to. I just had to get closer, so the tune could penetrate my ears better.

Upon snooping around the corner, to my surprise, it was Ross McDougal, one of the original members of the now defunct but popular orchestra of long ago. It's been ages since I've seen Ross, or danced to his music. I didn't know he was around anymore, as things do happen to a lot of old acquaintances. I just figured that Virgil Rux was the only active one left representing that old Rux-McDougal orchestra.

That afternoon, Ross and his wife Leona were bringing back musical memories to a lot of retired citizens that are now taking it very easy. A new generation nurse thought the McDougal tunes were catchy, and some-

Not to be outdone, our own Rocklyn grown kid, Les Welch got his start out here at Rocklyn by playing for the neighborhood dance fans. Les had that something that made his musical ability raise to the point where he organized that well known Mom and Dads orchestra. He sold recordings by the thousands, and got on national television by performing for the Hugh Downs show.

Then Les Welch's career came to an end when sudden death took him away. Rocklyn made a second stab at trying to send another orchestra to national fame. The Sterett-Robinson group got their start by playing for Wilson Grange dances. But George and the Sterett brothers decided to stay in the cattle business, so they let the road to Nashville slide down the drain.

Then came the wave of local professional western dancers. When Howard and Elizabeth Janett got through training themselves to do those fancy steps, they had Paul and Elizabeth Clark introduce those precise dance numbers to us Rocklynites. They were aided by Bill and Lydia Buck, and 'Chief' Van Skiver, and wife Nettie. It was just a treat to get out of their way, and watch them gracefully glide through those smooth numbers.

I quickly put together a noisy amplifying system, and hooked it up to Howard's old antique record player. For learning purposes, we had it made. I could slow this spring wound Victrola down so the puzzled ones could catch up with the music, or bring the music to a complete halt, so the rooky recruits could have time to untangle their feet.

It's been years since we lived those days. Seems like dancing the way some of us knew it went out like a wet cigar. Years ago, the old and the young mixed country entertainment together. Then came the split. The Beatles really started it. Young folks joined the loud music, and did a lot of stationary wiggles instead of dancing. Somehow I miss those old dances. There was something about that lively old music that made you want to go go go. Then a sudden waltz was played, and you felt real smooth like.

times sentimental. She couldn't see why those pieces aren't played anymore. Well, the big time orchestra music got put on the shelf when the Beatles sort of initiated the rock and roll type of noise.

During the real early days, most rural dances had to settle for a fiddle player, and a piano accompanist. They knew about a dozen tunes that were stored in their heads, but when they released them through the bow, and piano keys, all the tunes sounded about the same, with varying degrees of speed.

When the days of the Guy Lombardos, and the Glenn Millers type of music crept into the rural dance halls, the frontier fiddlers gradually fell by the wayside. They just could not put together all the necessary sounds to make sweet music.

This gave Ross, and his farm bred friends a chance to get going with those musical pieces played by big time

orchestras. Their first break came way before the back waters wiped out the fertile farm valleys below Hawk Creek Falls. At that time, Vincent Moore had a large orchard that produced lots of eating apples. Vincent had just finished building a large packing shed before apple picking time. Mr. Moore thought his spacious new shed would be a neat place to throw a public dance. It was his way of dedicating the new building.

That event launched the newly born orchestra featuring Virgil and Orville Rux, Ross and Jack McDougal, and Viola, an eligible young lady that later became Mrs. Orville Rux. The Hawk Creek Falls dance turned out to be a big deal.

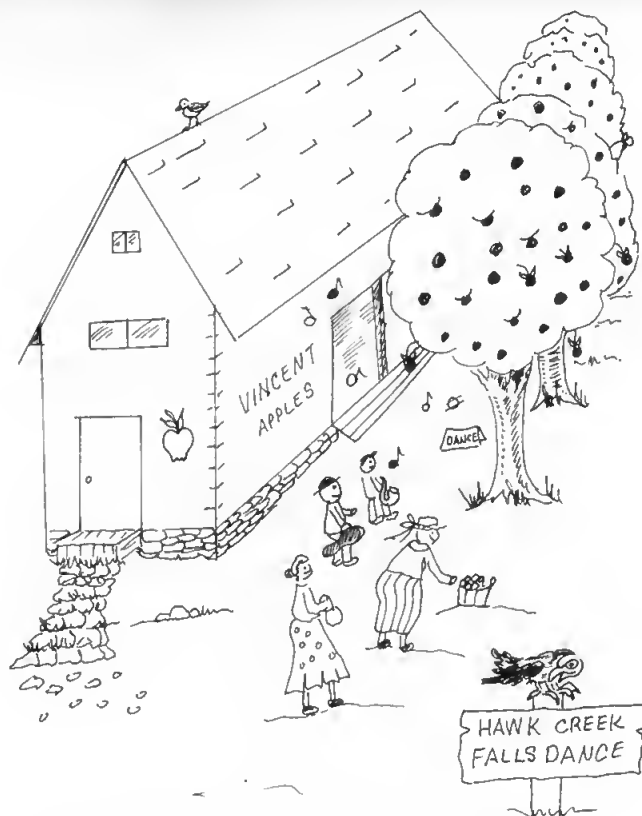
After a year, because of demand, this popular orchestra divided itself into two groups, and was called the Rux and the McDougal orchestras. Since Jack the drummer stayed with Ross, Harold Rux joined his brothers' setup, and started drumming.

Many a Grange hall accessories (out houses, woodsheds, etc.) were paid for by having these orchestras play for their public dances. The Mondovi Grange Hall was built from profits that those players drew. Teddy Zeimantz stated that part of his young growing period was spent sleeping on Grange benches while his parents danced to the strains of sentimental waltzes, and fast stepping tunes.

Virgil and Ross saxophones played out notes equal to that of professionals. Especially when it came to those moon waltzes. Their saxophones made a person dream of a full moon, romance, and lots of roses.

Both orchestras had a neat habit of announcing mixers throughout the evening. All the men would line up on one side of the Grange hall, while the ladies filled up the opposite wall. When the orchestra got going, a fast stepping rush to the center of the hall took place. Partner dancing began when contact was made. Usually a square dance or two was thrown in to satisfy the old timers.

When it was time for the orchestra to turn itself off for the night, Home Sweet Home generally was played. Sometimes the tune of 'After the ball was over, many a



hearts are aching,' could be heard, which was appropriate for those few that got jilted.

Ross is retired now, but not his music. His saxophone cheers up a lot of people in rest homes. Virgil stayed locally, and is actively engaged in museum work. His interest helped make the Lincoln County Museum a reality.

Nature has been kind to Ross, and Virgil. Neither has lost their heavy shocks of hair that still require daily combing. Both have retained the same good looks they had when they were making music throughout the dance halls in those fabulous 20s, and during the depression days.

Early Spokane Entertainment

Like many of you, I was too late in arriving to know what the Spokane entertainment world was like during the gay nineties, and saloon days. It was in the early thirties that the entertainment world caught my adult way of life. That was years before Sugar showed up on the scene.

Spokane in those days was much different than it is now. It was sort of a mini Las Vegas, minus the gambling tables, big stage shows, and call girls. However, a red light district was available for open trade. Raids usually didn't take place 'til the complaints piled up too high.

There were 13 theaters located in downtown Spokane. How many of you remember the Liberty, Band Box, Granada, Empress, Ritz, Unique, Rex, Orpheum, Post Street, etc? Only the State, and Fox were able to survive the changing times.

Except for the State, the few movie houses downtown are just small projection rooms. The Fox is now divided into three parts. Some outside shopping districts do have newly built cinemas for those that want to get off their TV chairs for a change in atmosphere.

The State Theater is older than it looks. It has a stately history of lots of stately events, including the world premiere showing of 'Vision Quest' a made in Spokane picture. Although not an earth shaking movie, Spokane does have the background for movie making.

The Fox was built on the eve of the depression, at a cost of a million bucks. It was able to survive all through the depression years. For many of us, it was where we saw our first talking picture. The Fox handled the more expensive traveling stage shows. Tobacco Road was one of them. Although it is a classy theater, it projected Spo-

kane's first pornography film in those no no days. A policeman stood outside to see that only matured eyes were allowed to go in.

When that large historic auditorium at Main and Post was torn down just before the depression, Spokane's bright lights started to dim. Hard times started in by closing the Orpheum's doors. It was a dream theater, right out of the past with its fancy 19th century styling. The stage took care of the Pantages circuit, and other traveling vaudeville acts. The receivership didn't want to spend the money to take down the marquee sign of Mae West, in "She Done Him Wrong." That advertisement was left hanging over the street for months.

The old Hippodrome Theater caved in too, but was never able to revive itself. The Hippodrome wasn't as large as the Orpheum, but it had all the historic trimmings of an old time theater. It was in a ghost like condition when some revival minded evangelists moved into the Hippodrome. They used it to warn anyone stopping in that the world was in a heck of a shape. Later the cold weather shut down their nightly free warning messages. When spring came, it was torn down as a P.W.A. project.

At that time, the wheat price hadn't raised much from rock bottom. The bread and soup lines on the east end of Spokane began stretching out real long. The unemployed took over a large vacant brewery, and named it, "Hotel De Gink."

Honeymoon Days

A long time ago farmers had to creep before they could walk. When 1939 rolled around, the price of wheat had doubled itself from the rock bottom price in 1932. Even with that 100 price raise, wheat was still selling for less than a dollar. Yet a bushel of wheat bought more stuff 46 years ago than it does now. In some ways farmers that were broke then, were in much better shape than the speculative farmers that are in debt today.

In those pre-war days, a lot of us farmers didn't have much money in our pockets, but it didn't cost anything to wait for better times. When 1942 showed up, wheat was finally needed, and inflation stood still for a long period of time, due to a government price freeze.

In 1939 when I was broke, I happened to develop a strong desire to get married due to a good opportunity that I was faced with. Not wanting to wait for my government allotment check to come, I borrowed \$25 from my brother-in-law so I could get my act going. That twenty five bucks made a midnight elopement possible, also a three day honeymoon, Spokane style. In those days, it wasn't the 'in thing' to shack up with a new found Sugar to see if we were made for each other.

Since I spent time exploring Spokane during my single days, I knew it offered a girl that lived a sheltered life, all the necessary entertainment to make her honeymoon a memorable one. By handling the borrowed \$25 just right, I knew it could be done. That Justice of the Peace and that poor man's bridal suite at the Coeur d'Alene Hotel took quite a chunk out of our spending money. Our wedding picture came to 25 cents. Payless Drug

Another theater, the Post Street bit the dust, but it didn't say shut as long as the Orpheum. It had the largest stage ever built in Spokane, and also the tallest ceiling. Three balconies graced the inside, one on top of the other. It made a guy dizzy looking down from the top to the stage.

At the height of the depression, between 1932 and 33, the Post Street managed to open again. Mainly because the Post Street let its doors open to a burlesque circuit. By showing two full length movies, and a risque stage show for a matinee price of 15 cents, people came. A charge of 25 cents caught the wealthy evening trade, after the supper dishes were put away. Ironically when I took in the 15 cent show, one of the feature pictures was titled, "If I Had A Million," starring Gary Cooper.

Around 1945, the Passion players from the Black Hills of Spearfish, South Dakota, were able to stop over and present the Passion Play. They found the Post Street stage large enough to hold all the local extras, animals, and the paraphernalia needed to put on that spectacular religious story.

It was always a treat to treat close friends to their first talking moving picture show. Some turned me down flat for religious reasons. My folks never missed a Will Rogers or a Shirley Temple picture. Country towns weren't too far behind Spokane in installing a 'talkie.' But Spokane's large screens, and stage shows captured locals when they went out-on-the-town.

Store had a self-taking portrait booth, with a curtain for privacy. When we thought that we looked just right, Sugar pushed a button. After a happy hug or two, the picture came out of a handy slot.

Our wedding dinner consisted of a brisk walk over to the Washington Street Market, where a Dutchman and his wife served a plate full of dinner, including soup, and pie for 25 cents. There was a cover charge of five cents to have a scoop of ice cream dumped on Sugar's pie.

Since Sugar never saw a stage show, it was pure luck that Sally Rand was in town, and performing on the Orpheum stage during our honeymoon. Sally's body, and her bubble put on an artful show, for which she was famous. The glitter and beautiful stage lighting, as well as the loud music that the Orpheum's orchestra blared out, overwhelmed Sugar.

The next day was more of the same, except window shopping was stretched out a little longer to take care of our fantasies. On our last afternoon in Spokane, we called on Sugar's aunt Susie to see how she would react to our sudden marriage. She didn't give a darn what we did, and told us to set down to a bowl of her Polish type of potato soup.

After paying what we owed for the use of a hotel room, I found out there was enough money left to buy a box of smelly cigars. We took it for granted that we were going to be shivaried when we got back to Rocklyn. Guess it was just lots of luck, love and tender care that we made a go of it for all these years.

4-H Camp

Helping Sugar with her 4-H clubs throughout the years, gave me a high. Kids are the best kind of people, because everything you do for them is still new, and it's easy to make them happy. Besides you can act like a kid with them, and enjoy the fun part of life.

It all began when we were fresh married. With the aid of a brand new county extension agent, Alice Gimlin, Sugar was able to start her first 4-H club. Lacking in experience, her group did manage to make a lot of gooey cookies, and helped in community paper drives and stuff like that.

A few years later, with her second group, Sugar didn't giggle as much and was able to make a steady successful 4-H leader. Being a flunky, I didn't have to advance so fast.

I think Sugar's third group was one of the first to camp out nature style down at Lake Roosevelt. It was on a bare spot that later became Camp Na-Bor-Lee. Sure, there was lots of sand, trees, and water, but that was all. The back end of the truck held all the adventurous 4-H girls that cared to go.

Night facilities included a pup tent where Sugar's and Betty Brown's feet stuck out, and a large survival canvas for the girls.

When Camp Na-Bor-Lee got organized, volunteer minded workers made it look like a campsite. The surrounding 4-H clubs consolidated to hold an annual four day blowout.

In the 1960s, Sugar and Betty Brown were the camp cooks. Bob Draper, the instigator of this setup, supplied all the portable equipment necessary to bring camping out of the primitive stage. I posed as the life guard, and beach entertainment guy.

Working with 4-H kids is a satisfying experience that's worth a guy's time. It's much easier than being a parent, because when the kid's outing time is over, it's up to the parents for continual daily guidance.

I probably never contributed much constructive knowledge that the kids cared to soak up. I did enjoy helping out with harmless ventures that the young folks insisted on.

Wanting to do something adventurous one summer, a group of returnees drooled to set up their club headquarters on Na-Bor-Lee's lonely island. The idea was met with disapproval, but was never handed a complete no no. More guts entered the young ladies' systems when the county agent's daughter said she would join them on their planned invasion of the island.

By pretending to have a good time with the row boat, I was able to smuggle the girls' paraphernalia, and tent over from the mainland. The protection of nightfall helped disguise what we were up to. A shallow but cold water swim brought the girls across to their island retreat.

Sleep didn't enter my mind that night. I kept thinking those girls would forget to wake up in time to get across for camp reveille. When daylight came, bless their hearts, they swam back before the bugle tooted its waking up camp notes.

They were allowed to keep their headquarters for the duration. It turned out to be one of the most interesting places to visit, or sunbathe before swimming back.

Like all nicely run 4-H camps, constructive work shops, and programs were always well arranged.

When afternoon play time arrived, it was fun having the boys make their own racing rafts out of drift wood. The final afternoon was when the big raft racing event took place.

The boys got to pick their favorite camp girls as co-pilots to help them navigate their rafts to victory. Or to help pick up the pieces if the raft deteriorated in the middle of the bay. Even a battery operated sound system was used so the spectators onshore could receive instant race results.

Oh sure, there was some camp sadness. A couple of youngsters developed homesickness. It's a terrible disease. I catch it easy, if I'm over 400 miles from home. One 4-Her, I just had to take back when he thought more of home than he did of Camp Na-Bor-Lee.

On the second day of camp life, I found my little niece, Roberta standing in a zombie like pose. She came very near caving in from homesickness. However, she was able to sweat it out when I promised to check on her folks, and see how her pet ducks were making out. Also have her mother tell me the outcome of her favorite weekly TV episode, so I could relay the story back to her.

Moving a truck load of kids back to their homes always included an afternoon stop-over at Fort Spokane, or Porcupine Bay. An extra bonus swim was then enjoyed, and the last crumbs of camp scraps were used as food.

Our final 4-H days came to an end with the dispensing of our Jolly Joggers club. For health reasons, it was something we all enjoyed. When the running craze set in, it was not necessary to keep going. There are now oceans of folks to run with. All in all, it was those 4-H days that Sugar and I will always remember.



Between swims at Camp Na-Bor-Lee.



The last days of the 4-H Jolly Joggers.

Farming German Style

Barbara Olsen Chrisman, who lost her battle with cancer, brought back some early 4-H memories. Sugar was struggling along successfully with her first 4-H group when Barbara returned from Germany. She was one of the first teen age lassies eligible to make that exciting stay in Germany under the International Farm Youth Exchange program.

Barbara helped Sugar and her kids get their entertainment act going by appearing as the star feature out at Telford. The Grange hall was packed with a mixture of Grangers and non-Grangers.

Her collection of slides included rural family life, scattered farm plots, and agriculture equipment. Just what we needed to see if the Germans were ahead of us, like the Japanese are now in making some better stuff.

Barbara's dad, Bud, told me what a typical harvest

was like when his exchange daughter was there. Seems like they made a lot of work out of harvesting their crops. First they marched out to their plots, and bound the standing wheat. Then they hauled the stuff back to their villages, where barns with upper doors awaited the wheat bundles.

The cut grain remained in protective custody 'til a custom thrashing rig was set up by the barn, where bundles were tossed out of the upstairs door, and shoved into the thrashing machine's spinning cylinder.

Naturally this shelling job rendered the barns empty, but not for long. All that fresh straw that got blown around was pitched back into the barn. The grains soon became flour so lots of bread could be eaten.

What also was puzzling 'til I asked, "Why don't the German farmers consolidate their farm plots by trading

back and forth with their neighbors? That way the field machinery could turn around properly without throwing dirt into the neighbor's fields. Well, it seems like a lot of those plots were kept segregated out of respect for their ancestors who traditionally willed it to them.

Some day, a wilder generation will come along, and common sense horse trading will take place. Fields will then grow to a respectful size by putting all their eggs in one basket. Who knows, some day they may even harvest their crops right out in the open fields.

One would think that this style of farming is only expected in certain European districts. But wait, when I was still farming, a group of mini-farmers right out here in

Harry Tracy Country, were using a much more primitive style of farming than any European farmer would care to go back to.

When spring came, these sincere earth people would scatter handfuls of wheat on fertile spots of volcanic ash. Come harvest time, a hand scythe was used to whack the crop off. However, they did purchase some modern plastic sheets to cover the wheat sheaves 'til hand harvest took place.

I told this group of hand harvesters that I would save them a planting job by not combining out my wheat field corners. That year, when harvest time arrived, this clan figured it was cheaper to find a job, and buy bakery made bread.

Farm Crisis

Not long ago on the front page of the Sunday Spokesman-Review, an article entitled, "Farmers sow money but reap debt." With headlines like that, it could make farmers feel unhappy when they stick seed wheat in the ground, put expensive fertilizer in the soil, and spray all kinds of high power stuff over crops.

The article does hold out hope for those farmers that have their names on a deeded farm. They can have a chance of reaping dough instead of debts. Also some of us old landlords that can't cut the mustard anymore, ain't necessarily reaping debts, even though our land investments may only be paying 3 or 4 % in the form of rent money.

But what's in it for the young guy with a wife, and maybe a kid or two who says, "Let me farm your land, as I've got the 'hots' to be a farmer?" Here is the computerized dope for the 'now' generation: "The 1984 cost of production for a 1,100 acre farm in Eastern Washington winter wheat country is \$195 an acre for wheat. With a 60-bushel-per-acre yield at \$3.30 a bushel, the return is \$198 . . . But for the tenant farmer, subtract a third of the crop for payment to the landlord, and that leaves \$132 per acre gross income." It doesn't take a read out computer to tell you that there is a loss of \$63 per acre.

"Arithmetic is so frighteningly simple," so says that Sunday's article. "Some highly efficient tenant farmers manage to show a profit. But in some cases the profit appears only on paper; in reality the farmers are losing money."

In my depression days of long ago, we didn't have computers to forecast our hopeless troubles, so we didn't have as much information to worry about.

For added cheerless news, consultant Allen Hatley of Spokane, who manages farm property, stated, "If the price of wheat falls to \$2.80 a bushel, not an unreasonable possibility, given the current surplus, and Reagan administration's goal of lowering support prices, the best decision I could make is to put the land in grass, and not even rent it."

Some good may come by retiring our land back to

grass. It would give farmers time out to go down to Ritzville and look and wait for those mountains of wheat to disappear. When the horizon at Ritzville is back to level again, it will be time to consider going back to farming again. Just don't panic! This is the third big farm crisis that some of us have managed to live through.

We do have Tom Foley's shoulder to cry on. He knows a lot about a lot of things. After Foley's talk in Davenport, it was neat of him to hang around 'til the last dog was hung. A group of us had a chance to visit with him. In my hey-day, it was Walt Horan that helped brace us farmers up during moments of severe crisis.

This squeeze we are going through now can help make better farm managers, and less gambling on the prospects of never ending prosperity. Until the farm crisis has passed, some farmers may have to recycle their farm machinery. That's what old timers did when times got tough. Some of us went out to the pasture and revived old discarded drills, and stripped castaway combines of their valuables.

When the 1931 farm crisis hit, the government had not even started to develop the habit of jacking up the destitute farmers. Those early brave ones that traded their horses in for tractors were discriminated against. I could not get a loan because most of my loan money would have gone for tractor fuel. My neighbors with their barns full of hay for horse fuel could get small loans.

Most of the borrowed money the horse farmers received went to keeping them alive, while the tractor farmers were left to starve. Only fate saved the flat broke horseless farmer.

One gloomy day, 56 years ago, my tractor was grounded from lack of fuel. Orlin Maurer knew about my plight, so while I was waiting for the oil company to trust me, he stopped in and said, "This morning I saw Charley Rux carrying a can of gas out to his tractor. I wonder how long he can afford that." Then to rub things in a little deeper, Orlin continued, "My horses can work on empty stomachs. All they need is a lot of hay when they get back to the barn, ha-ha."

Dust Of Wrath

For the last 40 years, most wheat fields held bountiful crops. But our County didn't always look like a garden of Eden. It went through an era like John Ford so vividly told in his dust bowl story "Grapes of Wrath." Our historic low point in the Big Bend Country should have been called "Dust of Wrath."

Fast traveling winds that went by here over 50 years ago (1931) blew so hard that a lot of Odessa's airborne soil landed at Rocklyn, and layers of neighboring farms landed up on the Indian Reservation. Some Indians starting cussing the white man for disturbing nature's garden of flowers, grass and sagebrush.

Yes thousands of acres qualified for Washington's "Dust Bowl." The main event took place in the Ritzville-Odessa area. It left a trail of sand buried fences as far north as Lake Creek, and east to the edge of Davenport. Foot burners were used to try and stop the drifting soil, only to find sand filled furrows for their reward. Many a farmer got to see what the next six inches of soil looked like.

My mother's geese never knew a thing about flying, but were able to use the wind successfully for a tail-end-take-off that landed them safely down at the creek.

Dreams of German sausage vanished when our newly purchased little piggies got lost forever in that dust storm. If St. Helens had blown its stack then, very few farmers around Odessa would have known about it. Between storms scoop shovels were used to clean out the field filtered dust from lots of homes that had rickety doors and rattling window panes.

After the blown out crops got reseeded there weren't enough days left, or moisture to get yields into the double digit figure. Yields made from Russian thistles to eight bushels an acre. It caused my dad's renter on the Lake Creek place to go back to moonshining, and it caused me to go out to Dave Stelzer's junk pile and strip a discarded combine for transplants. Such emergency methods made it possible for an ancient combine to cut a puny stand of wheat.

Except for the love of farming, those days were no bowl of cherries. Rock bottom wheat prices started the year before, adding insult to injury. The thought of getting kicked off the environmental nest like they did in "Grapes of Wrath" was enough to make a person cry. A lot of us felt lucky that we didn't have to join the bread lines in those depressed days.



This picture was published in a 1931 farm magazine, the same year the dust bowl hit Lincoln County.

Good Samaritan

Who was the good guy of long ago that couldn't stand seeing some of his farm friends going down the drain? It was Fred Reinbold. During the darkest days of that great depression, Fred was the local manager of an oil company in Davenport.

Ed Kruger, Lynn Gunning, and myself ran out of money at about the same time. We had every reason to walk off our farms, and join the soup lines, but that sounded distasteful to us, so we learned to live from one crisis

to the next. The final blow came when no gasoline got to our farms unless it was paid for. Without fossil fuel, we could not produce wheat that nobody wanted.

Fred Reinbold called up on a Monday morning, stating he was bringing his boss out to try and convince him we were farmers that some day would pay for stuff like gasoline and oil.

I was topless when I approached the oil executive's

car. Fred's boss looked me over, and asked, "Did you have to hock your shirt to keep alive?" Upon leaving, I remember Fred saying to his boss, "All Walt needs is a little more gas 'til fall."

After the empty report I gave Fred and his boss, they drove over to Ed Kruger's farm, then back to Lynn Gunning's place for more monetary evaluations.

Little did we know at that time that Fred's boss turned thumbs down on extending more gasoline credit to us. Before any gas was allowed to leave in our direction, Fred had to sign a note. By so doing, he put his own pay check on the line as security for three helpless farmers.

In those pre-diesel days, gas was delivered in a primitive way. Guy Canfield, a well known gas delivery man, worked at Fred's plant. He would back up the company's pint size truck to fill my six 55 gallon barrels.

The tank on the truck had a short unloading faucet sticking out. A long rod that held a slug of rings was bolted on the back bed. Counting the gallons was done Chinese style. Everytime a five gallon bucket was filled, Guy would slide one of those rings over to the other side of the truck. Then he would dump the bucket that was loaded with gasoline into the barrels.

When the barrels were filled, Guy would then count the rings that were moved across the rod, and multiply that number by five. The final penciled in figures were the number of gallons delivered.

Later, through the process of mental evolution, Mr. Canfield figured out how to measure delivered gallons more easily. He notched gallon markings on a stick that was a little longer than the barrels.



Mamauth cambine and Rev. Williamsan, wheat hauler standing alongside of a huge wheat truck - massive machinery wasn't around when I was farming.

Buckets of gasoline could then be emptied without counting. It was a simple matter of sticking the marked stick into each barrel. The wetness would show the number of gallons that got dumped.

This marked advancement, brought forth a more accurate gallon count. Because sometime while visiting, Guy would forget to slide a ring across.

One Farmer's Crisis

Sometimes when I'm in Odessa, I can't help but think of my cousin, Ed Kiesz. He farmed in the heart of the old Russian thistle country near Batum. In those early days, Ed used to say, "It takes more faith than guts to farm out there."

As time passed, better farm methods, and a few extra thunderstorms made it possible for Ed and his family to move to the residential district in Odessa. He then began to enjoy semi-retirement with the rest of the Germans from Russia that had already reached their material gains.

When the Ed Kieszes got citified, Sugar and I went down to see how they were making out. To get the full effects of a typical Sunday in Odessa, we attended the whole works that was going on inside the Congregational church.

We were surprised to see Ed teaching the adult Sunday School class. With his sense of humor, we became interested in seeing how he was making out. After all, Sunday School usually is a place to work over some serious Bible thoughts.

The class was discussing a well known Biblical person. Some figured this certain guy was wishy-washy. Finally Ed ended the discussion by saying, "No he wasn't that kind of a bird. He was a man of strong faith, even

though he may have sounded a little wobbly at times."

Before the services, I asked Ed how he made out when he taught Sunday School, "Oh I give all those Bible characters a lot of credit for what they did. When things get a little hairy, I sort of let the rest of the class figure things out."

For those early Odessians, it was no easy chore to reach their fulfillment. The depression of the early thirties wasn't very kind to the Ritzville-Odessa farmers. They had a harder time scratching for a living than us northerners did. Ed Kiesz told us once that even the birds had to lower themselves on their knees to look for food.

No crops, meant no straw. To keep their horses stomachs from collapsing, my other cousin Gottlieb had to make mercy trips up to Lords Valley where straw was being sold.

With cupboards as bare as their fields, most of the dust bowl farmers beat it to the apple country, where the pickings were better. When apple picking money got into their pockets, they returned back home, and started dreaming of better farming days.

The season of 1931, Ed Kiesz didn't have to follow Odessa's fall migration to the apple country. He had mar-

ried into the Raugust clan. One of them, Rudolph Raugust got out of the Odessa area before the dust storms hit, and took up farming north of Davenport.

When Ed got his two and a half bushel per acre crop scooped up, he kissed his wife Bertha, and kids good-bye, and drove his two door Model T Ford Sedan into Odessa. He told Bill Raugust who was running the Odessa Trading Company, that he could come out to the ranch and get those drills, as he had no dough to pay for them.

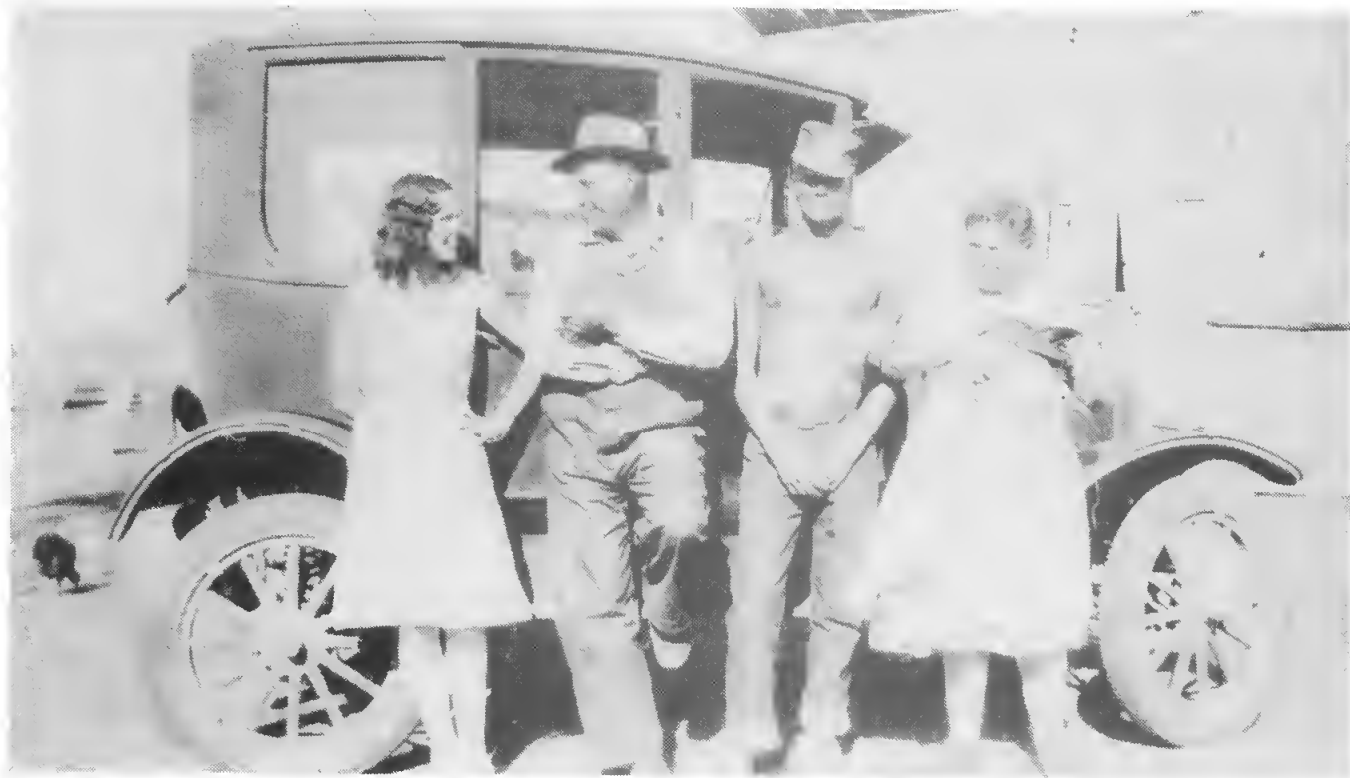
Needing survival money, Ed headed northwest to Davenport, and to his wife's relative's farm. He then made himself available to sew all the sacks that got filled on Rudy Raugust's combine.

It was a hot August Sunday when Ed stopped in to spend his first Davenport day of rest with us. Due to being

broke, Ed Kiesz's personality spark was missing. He looked tired. He told about the harvest job he got up here where the land was blessed. Ed said he didn't want to know 'til the next week whether the Trading Company would extend his debts.

Ed tried to take a nap on the floor. All at once he jumped up and called Bill Raugust, and asked, "Say, by golly, are you going to let me keep those drills, so I can farm?"

The way Ed started to wisecrack on the phone, we could tell he was getting a 12 month reprieve on part of his farm machinery. When Ed hung up, he said, "Wonder of wonders, dam, I feel good! Let me take you all for a ride in my Model T. It's all gassed up and is almost dust proof."



Sister, Ed Kiesz, me and mother, blocking the view of Ed's dust bowl limousine (1931).

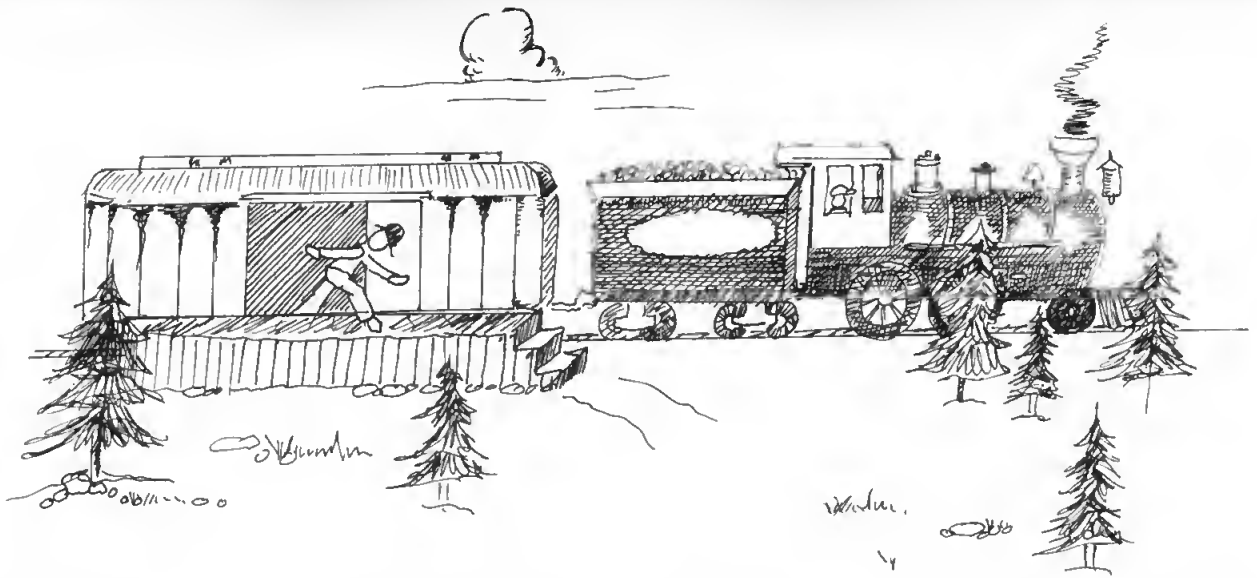
Go West Young Man

It's still kind of hard to shake off old rural school stories, especially after visiting with Harry Schneider. Harry and I just made it through the eighth grade and were able to survive. Our lack of education made us aware of what we didn't know, and made us appreciate what we learned afterwards.

Harry was a product of the depression days. A handsome young lad who came from the plains of Canada and North Dakota, where he learned to sing a lot of prairie songs. There was lots of room back there on those wind swept farms for parents to raise lots of kids, but to grow enough food to feed them during those drought years of the 1930s was a problem

One by one lots of young guys left the Dakotas for Washington with the hopes of finding farm work. One of Harry's brothers, Jack, had beat it in a westerly direction on a bicycle 'til he found a haven here at Reardan. Later Harry decided to follow his brother via the railroad tracks where box cars served as fresh air transportation to the Inland Empire. He took with him his wealth in the form of a twenty dollar bill, and used the sole of one of his shoes as a safety deposit box for that Federal Reserve Note. It was to be used only in an extreme emergency. His loose change of 75 cents lay scattered around in a pocket.

When Harry jumped off the freight train out here, every cent was accounted for. His hungry looks got him



here free of charge. Landing in a strange territory took some getting used to for this shy young fellow. Befriended by the Rudolph Raugust family, he was helped from getting too homesick. After earning some money, Harry was able to buy a guitar and other things that a young man in the west should have.

Taking newcomer Schneider for an outing in Spokane proved to be fun. He enjoyed window shopping when he saw an array of musical instruments or some snappy western displays. Dad treated him to all the milk shakes he could hold. I don't remember for sure how many shakes he drank, but at 15 cents a crack it was starting to add up. The milk shakes kept Harry in a nourished condition all during the movie we attended.

The scab rock lands of Rocklyn was where Harry shone the brightest. Working for Frank Selde, the Olighers, and other cattle ranchers fulfilled his dreams of the west. In his spare time he had the challenge of stopping an outlaw horse named Tracy from tossing him in the air. Quite a conquest, for Tracy wouldn't allow anyone but Harry to sit on his back. Finally Tracy was sold to the US Cavalry, and probably was used only as a riderless horse in funeral parades.

Harry's singing voice did go public for a while. He

placed first in an amateur contest at the Orpheum Theater. His performance landed him a job at the Coeur d'Alene Hotel's Dutch Mill, 'til work out at Rocklyn beckoned him back.

While working on the John Oligher cattle ranch during daylight time, Harry was able to make use of his sleepy time hours for a while. He got a night time job on the building of the Mondovi elevator. The elevator got built to its proper height before burn out set in.

Things got going for Harry ever since those days of establishing himself. Seems like he was able to cross over a lot of thin ice safely. He is now the main farm owner in the center of Rocklyn, and the surrounding territory. A local farmer's daughter fell for Harry. It was ditto for him too. Then a marriage took place between Harry and Marj Knack, and the two raised a typical family.

Mr. Schneider's love for cattle still exists, and now he has oodles of pasture land. A lot of his farm holdings are under irrigation, supplying choice feed for all those animals that some day will land in meat eaters' plates. In partners with his son, Sam, it takes four combines to harvest their crops. Harry is starting his retirement process by getting rid of his insurance agency at Reardan. All this is quite a record for a box car kid from North Dakota.

The Year Of The Lakes

It may be scary to think about it, but this semi-arid country can have screwed up weather patterns. 1948 was a year to remember. Spring was nearly over when attacking thunder heads brought waves of water bearing clouds that emptied themselves for days. It caused havoc for the rest of the year. Farm equipment was getting stuck all during the last half of the growing season. Combines did the same thing in August. The Mielke brothers sank a large tractor in June when they hadn't learned to stay away from soft spots.

The first part of May, before the invasion of heavy rains, everything was calm west of Davenport. Winter wheat was standing tall. Farmers were busy plowing or working their dusty summerfallow fields.

May 15th was on a Saturday, so I parked my tractor in a low spot in the field so crooks wouldn't be able to find it for stripping purposes. The following Monday, inches of rain came down so fast on the summerfallow that it couldn't hold it all. The torrent buried my tractor, and plows in four and a half feet of sky water.

Not having the buoyancy of Noah's Ark, only the steering wheel and fenders were sticking out of that overnight made lake. A near shoulder high wading job had to be done in order to hook a long pull chain to the tractor. Howard Janett came to the rescue by placing his tractor on not too solid ground. His Cat had to dig five cat track holes in different places in the process of dragging my tractor up to the shoreline.

This was a pretty lake that the rain storms made. On the east shoreline, the clean summerfallow ran into the lake. On the other side, standing wheat rose out of this body of water and extended up over a slope.

There was 80 acres in that field that never made it into summerfallow that year. Out here at Rocklyn, the month of May recorded 9.60 inches of rainfall. A drier streak hit Davenport where 8.71 inches of rain fell in May. By taking Davenport's lower figure, more rain fell that month than fell in the whole year of 1929, when nature left only 7.30 inches of rain.

That year of instant lakes, rainfall tried to taper off by just dumping 3.01 inches in June. However, lakes in the fields stayed around, and took up farming space 'til the next year, when the year's moisture was less than 10 inches.

The summer of 1948 was long remembered. Sugar and I had no logical reasons to seek out lake resorts, as we had our own lakes. We did miss the sights of friendly bathers. But it was a novelty to park the combine near the waters edge, and take a shallow swim before devouring our harvest lunch in the shadow of the self-propel.

One soon learned not to combine too close to those freshly made lakes that didn't have thousands of years to develop a decent shoreline. Tempting looking wheat heads caused P. H. Janett to drive his combine too close to the waters' edge. He did a good job of miring his self-



propel harvester to a hopeless depth. Albert Stuckle's tractor got it out, but not without bending the harvester's drive wheel axles.

The new generation farmers figured it must have been a year of high yields. It was no such thing! In those days, there was no fertilizer laying around to dump on those rain soaked fields. The wheat roots didn't even bother about going down with the surplus water that was loaded with leached nitrogen. In fact, the roots just stayed near the moisture laden surface where it was warm and comfortable.

What was the total rainfall here at Rocklyn's Independent Weather Research Dept. for 1948? The record book shows that 27.04 inches had been dumped out of our leak proof rain gauge during that stormy year.

Mothballing Combines

The damp standing stubble is now giving off the smell of fall. For you that are now ready to store your faithful combine or combines; a feeling that another growing season has been taken care of, undoubtedly has entered your mind. It's like the words to an old song: "Harvest days are over, Jessie dear". Jessie must have been someone's harvest moon sweetheart.

There are two ways of mothballing the combine for that long storage season. One is to leave it to nature for protection, like some farmers do. However it does require some instructions to follow. For instance, when the last swath has been gobbled up, look for a spot around the farmstead with soil deep enough so the combine won't mire down when spring thaw sets in. Be sure the spot chosen is located so you won't run into the machine on some dark night. Take the ignition key out and put it somewhere where you might remember where it is the day or two before next harvest.

Usually when the last grain stalk has been beheaded by the combine, those outside storage type farmers generally don't let the separator bounce itself empty. Some gas is saved by so doing. The other benefit is that it does leave enough straw sticking out both ends of the harvester. This helps keep some of the winter snows from drifting in on the chaff filled sieves, and straw walkers.

A good rain will sprout the scattered wheat that rode the combine all during harvest. The growing seedlings will give the machine a greenish look as they try to protect the combine from the sun. If the combine is properly parked far enough away from the house, you will not



Ceremonial day - storing the combine.

have to smell the barn yard like odor when the straw and sprouted wheat starts to decay.

Properly preparing the combine for storage should become some sort of a ritual. If done correctly, a feeling of nostalgia will sweep over you. Pick a day when the wind is real quiet, and the sun has that stingy fall feeling when it hits the outside part of your skin. Tarry for a bit while looking out over the stubble fields. You will then realize your part of the job is done. Think for another moment, who will eventually eat all that wheat out there in those mountains of plastic covered piles? Will it be the Chinese, or a lot of Russians?

When the thinking time is over, make one last tour around the combine. This time with pencil and paper in hand. Write down any injuries that need attending to before next harvest. Place the note in an envelope, then put it in the tool box. The prescription letter will come in handy at repair time.

When dad was here on his harvest jaunts from California, Sugar would think we were having burial services for the combine instead of just storing it. Guess it seemed a little odd to make a ceremony out of it, but that's the way dad and I operated.

While I was giving the self-propel the air pressure and water bath treatment, dad would be writing diary like articles on the side of the bulk tank. He would pencil in his feelings of another harvest that had just ended. Also his thankful thoughts of being able to spend another summer with his family. Later his notes were always varnished over to preserve them 'til the combine was put out to pasture or sold.

Finally the shed doors were opened to the limit. With dad's hands signaling the right directions, it was a cinch to back the combine into just the right place. That usually concluded the services of putting the combine away.

This article on how to store combines brought out some interesting results. I was informed that one old combine that was left naked in the farmer's yard, wasn't that farmer's idea of proper storage. It happened to have been a trade-in. Due to its advanced age, the machine

company figured it would make their display lot look like a grave yard for old harvesters, so they left it out at the ranch.

Lucille McCaffery called me up and said her late husband Eddy had what she believed to be the most expensive storage place ever used for combines. The storage facilities and landscaping cost 13 million dollars!

Luckily it was built by the government who seems to do things in a big way. The defense department wanted a chamber huge enough to point a missile at Russia, so McCaffery's farm was chosen. When the government figured they had a better way to scare the Russians, they sold their storage place at a much reduced price to the McCafferys.

Since it was too spacious a place just for storing Eddy's self-propel, he let his neighbors place their combines in this huge underground silo. A total of four harvesters were found hibernating in this elaborate and protective winter home.

Talking to Lucille got me thinking. By golly, her husband Eddy had farmers beat by a mile when it came to bedding down machinery between working seasons. To protect the paint on his combine, waxing and polishing the machine was as necessary as replacing a broken sprocket. To Eddy, his machinery had to look like it had lots of love and tender care. Except for using a different brand of wax, his son Tom is following in his footsteps.

Speaking about the trouble some farmers go to when it comes to making a storage place for their combines, a retired farmer at the Ritzville Fair Saturday, told me how he rimmed out a place in his barn where the horses used to stand during feeding time. The height between horses and combines were considerable. So rather than try the hercules attempt to raise the barn off the foundation, he dug a trench at the entrance deep enough to bob the combine into this shelter. It was done without knocking off elevators and other essential things.

Since combines are used only about 20 days out of a year, it makes them the most expensive piece of machinery to store. Maybe some day it will be more practical just to have a self inflated plastic bubble wobbling over combines.

The Ice Man Cometh

Once upon a time, there lived a little known settler, and his wife of long standing. They located themselves down in a hole between the Maskenthine estate and the farm that made me happy for all these years.

Wood Hulbert was his name. He was a cynical atheist who liked to argue. However, he was a man of some faith. He believed that the copper bracelet he wore was sucking out a lot of his arthritic pains.

Since it rains on the just and the unjust, his wheat fields yielded the same as his more righteous neighbors did.

Because his farm was small, it held a small field, a small pasture, and a small number of cattle. With luck, Wood was able to scratch out a living.

But he was rich in dogs. He owned an advancing

army of dogs. These ruffians would come charging over the hill at anyone who dared to make their way to the Hulberts.

In his later years, Hulbert became sort of a gloom and doom guy. He predicted that those Odessa dust storms would wipe out all of the Big Bend Country. He used to say, "They should never have broken out all this land. This country was made for cattle."

When Mr. Hulbert was full of fire, and at his high point in life, he opened up a one man industry. Ice farming! It was made to order for him. A spring-fed pond was already there.

All winter long this pond was producing ice that went to waste when spring came. By installing a high dam, beaver style, Hulbert was put into an enterprising busi-

ness.

Harvesting ice didn't require much of an investment for Wood. His scattered odds and ends were easy to convert over to putting up ice. Wood's harvest machine was his arm muscles. They supplied the power to his long jagged ice saw. A bobsled served as transportation for storing ice on the farm. A discarded shed, and lots of sawdust kept the ice from disappearing.

In the early days, Davenport never did like warm beer, or meat that was ripening too fast. This gave Mr. Hulbert a chance to monopolize the ice market. Price wise, seasonal highs were reached in July and August. When it got cold, the ice market hit bottom.

On hot days, old Wood Hulbert did enjoy a cooling ride into town with his wagon load of ice. However, like cattle, some shrinkage took place in transportation.

The Reluctant Harvester

Years ago, the northwest won the honor of manufacturing a combine harvester that tested the patience of a saint. In Idaho, some guys got out their pencils, and figured out how to build a combine on a beefed up header frame.

To make their brainstorm come true, these guys hung on the following components: A cylinder, the length of the header platform, was attached to flail out the grain after the cut heads were laid back by the reel. A fanning mill was placed behind the cylinder. The straw sort of tumbled out in front of the horses' faces. They were chained behind to hitches. Their job was to push this outfit like a header, instead of pulling it from up front.

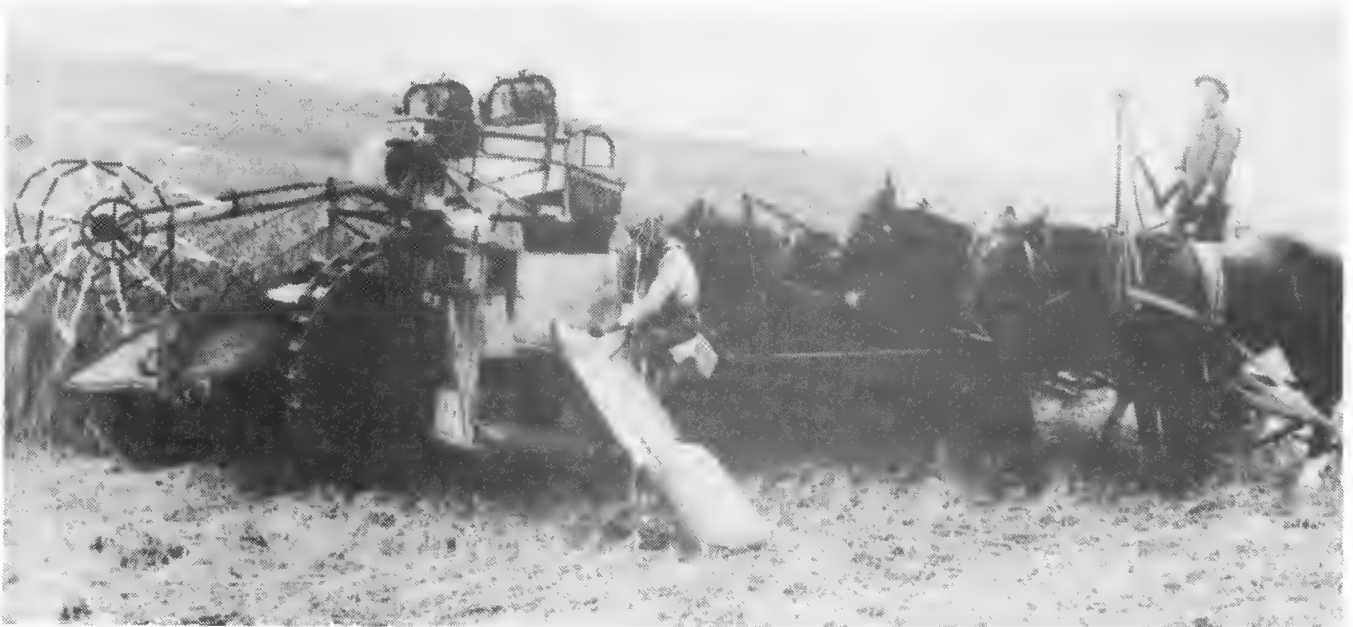
Right over the ground powered drive wheel, a platform was placed for sacking purposes. Elevator cups were installed to dump the thrashed wheat from the fanning mill type of separator into a sack that was hung there by an alert sack sewer.

The only other guy besides the sack sewer on this mechanical device, was a busy fellow doing a triple action job. He drove all the horses that were hooked up on the right and left sides of the driving platform. His legs straddled a heavy turning stick, and he sat on it like it was a saddle. By bracing his legs on the standing platform and twisting his butt right or left, this harvester was supposed to turn.

Right in front of the driver's nose was a long header punching shaft that had to be lowered or raised for grain height, whenever he had a hand free for usage.

Those proud inventors of the northwest were so excited that they named their contraption, 'The Idaho Harvester,' in honor of the state in which it was built.

This pusher type rig was never field tested correctly with live horse power. By pulling the rig from the back, it made the combine plow into the ground. Also, it caused



The ill-fated "Idaho" combine.

great frustrations for the horses, and the driver when it came to turning corners.

George Sweezy, a Rocklyn farmer got stuck by buying one of those rigs. The community figured if anyone could make the Idaho harvester operate successfully, George could. After all, he was an ex-school teacher, mayor of Rocklyn, and an all around smart guy.

Well, Sweezy did make the Idaho work in a half assed fashion. He made it into a push-pull rig by hooking some of the horses in front of the combine. The front team kept the combine from being pushed into the ground by the back team. Also the lead team was able to make the combine turn corners correctly. (Catch the picture?) It was the first and only combine ever built that eventually required two teamsters.

George Sweezy's land was level, and his soil had enough rocks in it to help the light bull wheel turn out power for threshing purposes. However, Sweezy got sick of his pain in the neck combine, and sold it to Wood Hulbert for a give away price that even 'small fry' Wood could not pass up.

Wood figured he had plenty of time to figure out how to make this nearly new combine work successfully. It gave him an opportunity to show those big wheel farmers he could harvest his own crop without their help.

But, Mr. Hulbert didn't have as much patience as he thought he possessed. After addressing a lot of naughty words to the combine, he parked the rig permanently alongside of his well used trail to the highway. Every time Wood went to town, he was reminded of the lemon he bought.

Mechanics

In the early car days when guys like Henry Ford, and other car makers put their products on the market, self-taught mechanics began making their appearance around Davenport. These know-how guys were available to go from place to place fixing clunked out motors. Instead of carrying a little black bag like doctors once did when making calls, these mobile mechanics carried a box of tools that increased in size as their knowledge increased.

Motors that exploded gasoline for power were very foreign to our ancestors. They did not know what a dismantled motor with a lot of round holes was for, so naturally they were at a loss to what made the crankshaft turn. The average settler did know how to use a monkey wrench, providing the bolt heads were square.

As a kid, I remember why Hiram Maurer and Roy Borck were such important persons around here when a motor wouldn't motorize. Hiram took a deep course in mechanics, but Roy just happened to watch other smart ones, and remembered what he saw. Both were equal in fixing motors that gave out.

Rocklyn's first mechanics were busy teaching new owners of horseless carriages to remember to take care of their new vehicles, and a few starting rules. When dad became the legal owner of a model T Ford for the second day, he forgot to turn the magneto switch on. After nearly cranking his arm off, he called Hiram Maurer. In no time Hiram had the switch turned on for dad.

One of Roy Borck's first mechanical calls for help came from cattleman Gus Kruger. His model T Ford wouldn't budge from his barn yard. A gallon of oil took care of the oil starved motor, but Roy's oil treatment didn't help the burned out connecting rods any. Gus was reminded to feed his model T a little oil once in a while.

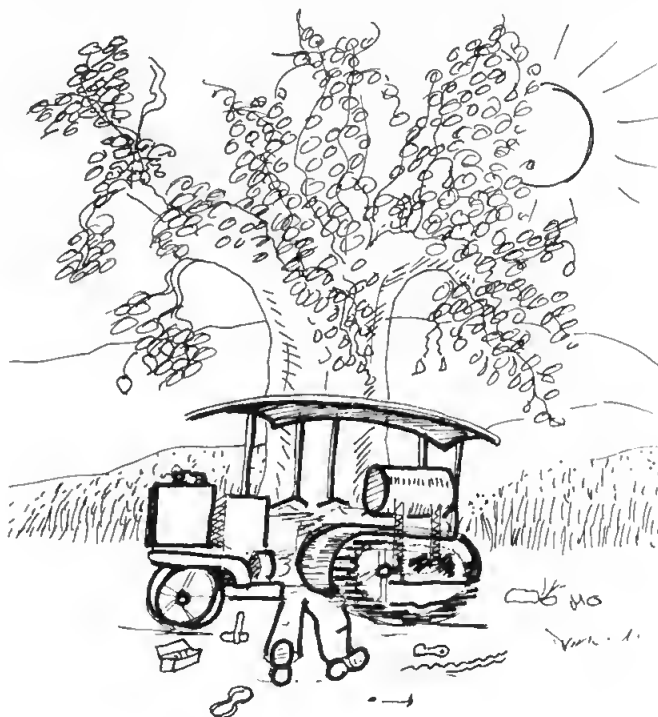
These new breeds of mechanical guys were able to handle most overhaul jobs with very few fatalities. They proved their fixing abilities by over-tightening most motors. to where it required a team of horses to drag the vehicles to a start.

One of Davenport's first independent mechanics that dealt with the motorizing public was Cliff Palmer. The ear-

ly 1920s were the days of wooden battery cases, and tires that never saw a life span over 5,000 miles. Cliff's all wooden car repair clinic looked more like a reconditioned blacksmith shop. Except the walls held all kinds of wrenches that were shaped to fit motor bolts. A fire wiped out this landmark, so Cliff hired out his mechanical skill to contractors that began building the Coulee Dam.

In 1933 when Davenport was aging prematurely from the depression a young lad landed in town by the name of Paul Clark. This rooky mechanic found a job at Hernas Chevrolet Garage.

After a spell, Paul created a desire to branch out on his own. A partnership was formed when he embraced Frank Reinbold. The two rented the Lewis building, and grabbed a hold of the Case machinery agency. Soon Paul's skill as a mechanic outgrew their cramped quar-





This farmer couldn't wait for powerful tractors to arrive.



A couple of early day lady swimmers from, Rocklyn, with part of their bare legs showing at a Medical Lake outing.



In the early days, some company farms around Harrington did things in a big way.



A sign on Ethel's old mail route in Harry Tracy's country.



What's left of Grandpa's dreams at Racklyn.



Above: Sister Ethel receiving the mail carrier's retirement plaque from a Racklyn patron.

Left. MOM (Margaret)



Trying to make a cowboy out of me at the tender age of two. "Having fun on Racklyn farm" was the title given when twice a week Spokesman-Review was promoting farm stories.



A home is your castle - One of Rocklyn's old time, not so prosperous settlers, Frank Scheffler, including his wife, a sow, little piggies, a dog and cats.



The oldest to youngest winners at LaCrosse run.



A couple of minutes before Mt. Saint Helen's ash fell on Rocklyn Zion Church.



The modern deluxe version of feeding the harvest crew in Lincoln County is the farmers wife's 'meals on wheels' system.

ters. A venture was undertaken to build a combination large modern shop, and machinery display building.

Upon completion, they qualified for the Caterpillar, and John Deere dealership as well as holding onto the Case line of farm equipment. A salesman was needed, so the Clark-Reinbold set up formed a third party chain. For a period of time, they had the largest farm machinery, and shop business in Davenport. (The title still stands.)

The two original partners knew the farmers' needs quite well, and got scared when their new charged up partner tried to sell farmers more machinery than they cared to lug home. It was luck that these two sold out their interest to a man with different ideas. Alone, without any shop or practical sales experience, it was easy sailing for partner number three to go broke all by himself.

This turn of events launched Paul Clark on a catering type of mechanical service. He consolidated his tools, and loaded them on a pick-up that was converted into a

mini mobile shop. In no time he was ready to make house calls at the drop of his hat, and to administer on-the-spot fix-em. Paul soon became known among farmers as the 'shade tree mechanic.'

Many a tractor and other farm power units throughout Lincoln County owe their lives to Paul Clark. This popular traveling mechanic made breakdowns less stressful for his farm patrons by displaying his repair process, whether it be under a shade tree, an open field, or in the farmer's shop.

In the spring of 1985 after 32 years of farm to farm personal service, Paul handed over his wrenches, and the traveling shop to Carl Thiringer who hopes to live up to Paul's unique service, and reputation. Paul and Elizabeth are well known landmarks in the Davenport area. They have launched three daughters successfully into the world. Elizabeth, a Reinbold by birth, captured her love for flowers, and other living things from her parents. Usually you will find her down at the Davenport gardens.

Big Al's Steam Engine

Dear Younger generation: All the farm work that you see being done by tractors, was once done by horses. Our granddaddies were forced to pound those old nags on their tails, because that was the only way they knew how to develop power for farming.

Our forefathers weren't cruel. One must remember; Where in the world could they have found tractors, when they were not invented yet? Still, there was an old timer who tried real hard to use steam power for breaking sod. But, his dreams were never realized.

It was Rocklyn's well remembered strong man, Al McMillan, who owned a large steam engine. His body size, and strength put an average man to shame. With his long arms and stooped body operating that mechanical wonder, it was a sight to behold.

After many seasons of running this thrashing outfit,

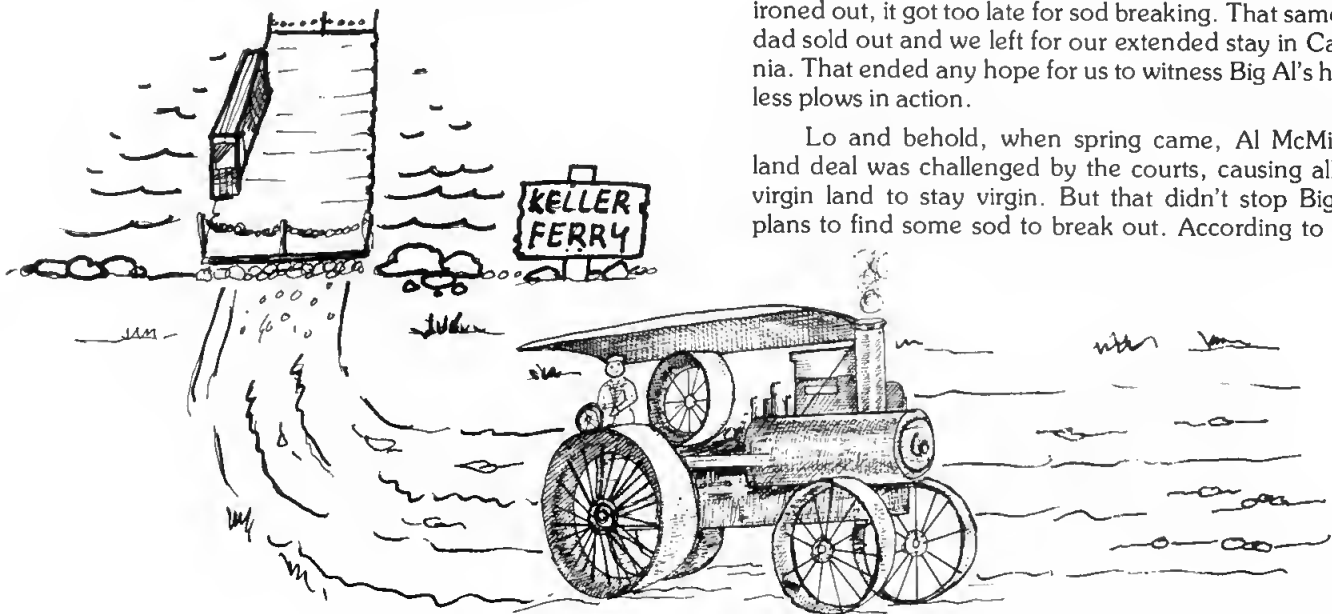
Big Al's brains went to work. Dreams of plowing out his newly acquired bunchgrass laden sod without using horses entered his mind. After all, his steam engine was just setting around with nothing to do 'til the next thrashing season.

Big Al's blacksmith shop held scads of tools. It made it easy for him to build a large coal tender, that fit snugly behind his self propelled steam power plant. McMillan also replaced the drive wheels with a pair of extra wide ones that would make our tractor wheels of today look small.

That fall, McMillan got so steamed up that he ordered two carloads of coal, and had it docked at the Rocklyn side tracks. His dreams of breaking out over 200 acres of sod was getting mighty close. His virgin land was located next to the farm I'm sitting on now.

But, by the time Big Al's wrenches got all the bugs ironed out, it got too late for sod breaking. That same fall, dad sold out and we left for our extended stay in California. That ended any hope for us to witness Big Al's horseless plows in action.

Lo and behold, when spring came, Al McMillan's land deal was challenged by the courts, causing all that virgin land to stay virgin. But that didn't stop Big Al's plans to find some sod to break out. According to Herb



Kruger, McMillan got ahold of some virgin ground north of Keller Ferry. Al must have said to himself, "Now I'm going to get a chance to break out some land, and finally I'll have myself an extra farm." It's like Herb told me, 'Al was ahead of his time.'

When the count down took place to leave Rocklyn, McMillan fired up his steam monster, and started his parade to Keller Ferry. By having no load except the coal tender, his steam outfit averaged about 20 pounds of coal per mile. Big Al did get his steam engine guided down that mountain side to Keller Ferry successfully. When he got there, he found out that the cable ferry was not designed to hold steam engines of such strength and size. Four model Ts, or eight tame horses, yes. But not that steamy, hunk of smoking steel.

Big Al had no choice but to start shoveling coal, and engineering the steam giant back to Rocklyn. Again his outfit started scaring the horses along the way, and covering the countryside with smoke. Since steam engines never came with overdrives, it was a monotonous job both ways.

When we moved back from California in the fall of 1927, things hadn't worked out very well for Al McMillan. It was a cold fall day in downtown Davenport when dad ran across old Big Al. He had just gotten out of jail, and was looking for a ride out to Rocklyn. He went broke while we were gone, and took up moonshining as his last enterprise. He had just finished paying his debt to society when my dad brought him home.

Big Al was a broken man when he stayed overnight with us. He was suffering from a bad case of the blues, and kept going to sleep while we were trying to visit with him.

As big and as scary as he looked, Mr. McMillan was a kind man. He and his cook raised a couple of nieces that were orphaned to marriageable size. One of them, Angie, married our neighbor, Ben Hall.

For years, Big Al's mobile steam power plant and coal tender was left to rust away on the ground that is now Gene Stuckle's farmstead. No one seems to know what happened to the mechanical wonder that tried so hard to find a chance to turn over lots of virgin ground.

Davenport's Distinguished Citizen

Charley Myers inherited a set of genes that kept him active throughout his long life. No one could say he didn't live a full life as a pioneer, a family and business man, and a politician. He took time out seasonally to spend nearly sixty years as a rugged outdoorsman, hunting with his political and business associates.

In the 1870s Ohio found Mr. Myers growing up totting a muzzle loader shotgun. It was natural for him to become a hunter and to create a love for the wide open spaces. A sort of teenage Daniel Boone of Ohio.

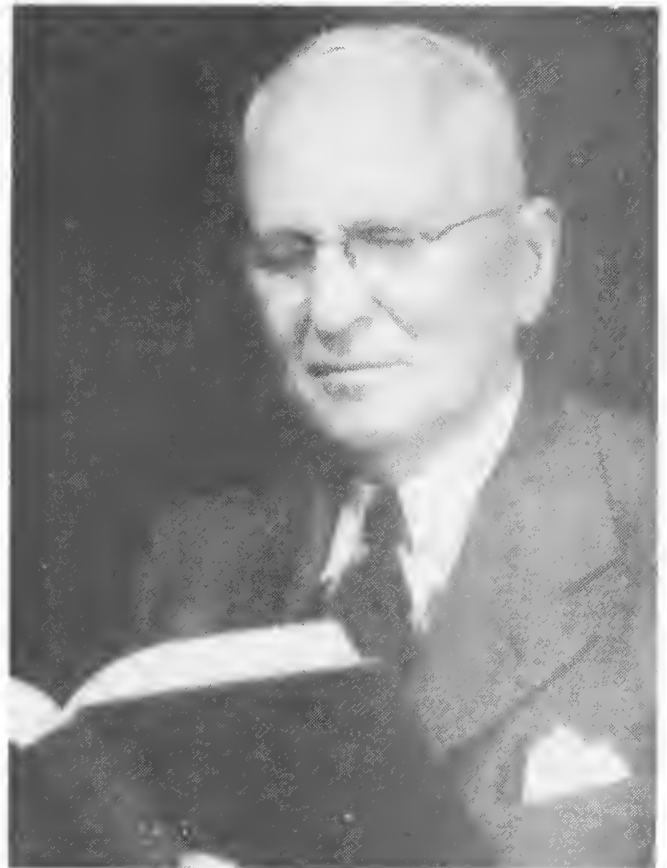
When Chalrey got big enough, he married his neighborhood sweetheart. He then developed a hankering for the west. An excursion train special was headed for Washington territory. He jumped on, leaving his bride to follow later, when extra money became available.

Upon landing in Davenport, Charley started walking toward Fort Spokane by following the old military road. Finally, a foot walking Myers came upon a blacksmith shop, with a log cabin standing near by. A 10 by 12 foot leanto was attached to it. Charley figured it was a good location to start up a new life. He was able to rent this combination log house and leanto for six bucks a month. He now had a large part of frontier town, called Larene.

Myers took a stage coach back to Spokane and bought nearly \$90.00 worth of groceries. The small attached leanto then became a grocery store. From then on fate was with this adventurer from Ohio. He and his family grew along with the growth of Lincoln County. Later a large store and residence was built. When the boom town of Larene started to crumble, Charley and family set up stakes on a high hill overlooking Davenport. It was a show place. I remember the rows of orchard trees trailing down the side of the hill. Being a business man, he saw the need for a watch and jewelry store in Davenport. Charley also added an optometrist shop, so he could take care of everyone that had punk eyes.

Charley kept himself informed on subjects of local and national interest. He was fortified with Republican convictions. This made his task for the State Senate race an easy mark in those pre-Roosevelt days.

Senator Myers was what we would now call a con-



Senator Chas. E. Myers.

servationist. During our own dust bowl years, in the early 30s, Mr. Myers had something to do with getting seed wheat loans during President Hoover's dire years. After he OK'd me, so I could pick up a loan down in Odessa, the heart of the 'blow land', Charley turned and said, "You know, it's the invention of the Cheney rod-weeders that got our lighter soils to blowing. Farmers were better off leaving the summer fallow alone." Most of us had to take that chance as we needed to save all the moisture possible. Eventually we did change to rough stubble mulching, making weeding a safer operation.

When hard times got harder, the Red Cross shipped in tons of rolled wheat in 100 pound bags. It was supposed to be distributed among farmers that were so broke that their livestock was going without meals. Myers had the job of handing out this free mercy feed. A carload was shipped to the Rocklyn warehouse. A farmer that got blown out of Odessa, settled here at Rocklyn so he could start life all over again. Needing some Red Cross handouts, he talked Charley into letting him have a wagon load of this rolled wheat. What Charley didn't know was that this former dust bowl farmer came to the warehouse with an old header box on his wagon, and filled it past the danger point. When Bill Chapel pulled up for his just

share, the boxcar was bare. This made old Chapel's hair stand on end. That same day, word got back to town about this hog overloading his wagon with welfare stuff. Mr. Myers then sent out a written permission for Bill to confiscate part of the Red Cross booty. Chapel then pulled up alongside the parked header box and unloaded enough of the rolled wheat to fill his Model T pickup to the brim. This legal, headerbox high-jacking saved Bill Chapel's chickens and pet pig from starvation.

Widowed, and his children long since having flown the coop, Charley busied himself during the second world war years, by being on the ration and draft boards. When time put him in his 80s, Myers took time out to write a book, "Memoirs of a Hunter." It is tailored for all outdoorsmen. This well preserved and neatly dressed fellow continued to attend dances for all occasions. There was a four generation span, when he danced with my sister-in-law during a fair queen selection. That was the last time I remember seeing this distinguished and community minded old timer.

One of Charley Myer's sons, Richard, who now lives in Electric City, has shared interesting events with me of his adventures during the last days of the farm horses, and the Model A Ford era.

A Tribute To A Historian

For me, the cream of the crop stories may be running out. Time will tell. I may have to scrape the bottom of the barrel. There's bound to be some horse thief stories to tell about, or a black sheep in the family that could be written up in a glorified way. It would then show that our community was a normal one.

There are some stories to be found in old newspapers that are authentic. Unreliable information can be picked up from old rounders who would rather tell about their early escapades than factual history.

Doing some hard thinking should bring back a lot of memories to us old duffers. But does it bring back memories to everyone? Due to no fault of their own, a not too rare an ailment can take away one's inherited mental ability, usually during the tail end of life.

A streak of sadness runs around inside of me when I think how Alzheimers disease has taken our friend Earnest Beieler out of circulation. He is under the caring eyes of the Lincoln County Nursing Home, and is receiving tender loving care from his wife Verna.

Earnest is one of the best historians left in our territory. He was compiling old records and manuscripts when he was stricken. Unless a cure can be found to re-light that projector in his mind, he will take with him forever the things he loved to share with others.

He has put together in a loose leaf book all the tools, and antiques of the Beieler homestead. Each article is well photographed, with detailed descriptions on how each item was used, and interesting features about them.

I regret missing a tour a few years ago that Earnest was going to take me on. It included his historical farmstead and collections. Postponing for another date came too late for Earnest to give me that 'in gut' feeling of his



Beller's barn built in 1888, once held all of Earnest's old time collections, including the hand scythe.

first hand information. Records of the Beiler family and their associates should some day be put down in book form. It would capture the feeling of pioneer life north of Davenport.

Mr. Beiler had the education that I sorely lacked. A former school teacher, he was highly respected by his students. Earnest helped me by verifying some historical

facts about the pioneer story on our local Big Bend cattleman, Barney Fitzpatrick.

Speaking of Barney, his granddaughter, Catharine Kelly, has been supplying me with all the Will Rogers columns I needed for my scrap book. I have also received from her some valuable historical articles that she researched for me from coastal newspapers.

Oral Roberts

All Christians interested in mercenary TV faith healers, should read a hard back book, entitled 'Give Me That Prime-Time Religion,' by Jerry Sholes, whose father is an ordained Presbyterian minister. Mr. Sholes is still a darn good Christian, despite getting his belly full of Oral Roberts.

Jerry Sholes was Roberts' television program writer, and producer from 1975 to 79. Shock set in when he found out how Oral operated his healing factor. Roberts' production line is all equipped with a computerized cash



Oral Roberts 'hot hand' in action.

flow pattern that boggles the mind! A million dollar home in Palm Springs, expensive cars, planes, and a high-rise throne-like office. Oral now has dreams of completing a huge hospital, so he can give his 'hot' healing hand a rest.

Mr. Roberts offered Jerry Sholes a substantial amount of money if he wouldn't publish his book, which Oral admitted offering. When that failed, someone beat Sholes up so badly in a Tulsa parking lot, that his face had to have plastic surgery.

Oral Roberts doesn't represent any particular religious denomination except his own money making brand. He did however get a lot of support by milking the smaller churches that were knee-deep in fundamental beliefs. Later for added prestige, and with the hope of getting a hold of more dough, Oral joined the Methodist church.

A schemer like Oral Roberts would soon disappear if addicted television Christians would go back to their local churches on Sunday mornings. I'm sure every clear thinking preacher would then say, "Thank God!"

Let's back up a bit to 33 years ago when Oral Roberts pitched his circus size healing tent on the outskirts of Spokane. At that time, Oral Roberts hadn't yet attained his goal of luxury living, but he was working hard at it.

Oral's well organized machine did supply some entertainment, and tons of false hopes. Of course, the physically incapacitated were sorted out before the healing services. Identification numbers were just given to the selected ones, including a few that were pretty wobbly, but could still respond to questions, and commands from Oral Roberts. If you were too caved in, or a 100% wheel chair patient, you were stored in an enclosed tent right behind Roberts' high-platform pulpit. This sad group was of no physical use for Oral's public demonstration. They were later to receive some long range benefit after the main show.

With all due respect for some innocent souls, it was at times rather amusing. A sincere pioneer friend of strong faith finally got his turn to receive Oral's 'quick fix.' He had some stomach trouble that needed taken care of by Roberts. His arm was in a sling from a harvest injury. Oral, thinking he wanted his arm healed, instead of a stomach adjustment, grabbed his bandaged arm and raised it high up in the air, and swung it around a bit as he said some powerful demanding words. Oral then asked the owner of the damaged arm if it didn't feel better. He nodded a hypnotic yes and walked off the slanting glory path.

Later I found him outside of this miracle tent. He was holding his bad arm with his good arm since it was loaded with pain from being jerked out of its crutch-like sling.

I then went back into the tent and mingled with the ones that weren't healed yet. Soon a couple of Oral Roberts' security guards came up on both sides of me and



Mrs. Lavern Davis, radio entertainer for 11 years (Molly O'Day), unable to speak above a whisper for five years. Sings clearly after she is prayed for.

literally self-propelled me out of the healing line. When my feet were able to touch ground, they asked if I had a healing permit card.

A dear friend that was stricken with leukemia, sat for three nights in that chilly tent with her pastor. It took that long before Roberts was able to place his hand on her head. Weakened by the ordeal, Oral took from her the last hope she had.

Roberts Fans Speak Up

I found out that I didn't win any awards from the Oral Roberts fans and that they believe in censorship. For example: Editor: This letter is in regard to the article in last week's paper in "Kikbacks" by Walt Kik, titled, "Healing hoaxes hath no mercy."

I cannot see that the publisher and editor would even allow such things to be put in the paper. To me it is junk. "Tough not my anointed," is what the Bible says—the Bible is God's word.

I never knew dear Oral Roberts had such friends as Walk Kik and Jerry Sholes — my, it is so nice they speak so well of him. But that's the way the world does God's people—they do not want God's work to go on.

The Rocklyn pastor was asked to trace the fate of three Spokane businessmen he knew that received the 'hot hand' healing treatment from Roberts. The minister's days of sleuthing ended rather quickly with the deaths of the three Spokane men. One died in short order when life sustaining medication was exchanged for Oral's cruel hoax. Without a doubt, Oral Roberts has caused a lot of untimely deaths.

Just remember this folks. God's judgment is coming one day, then it's your turn.

I was also in that tent meeting that Walt tells about and the power of God was great — I was healed of a blood disorder that night and I praise God for that.

Oral Roberts has a personal line to God and he lives, believes, and does what his God wants him to do, no matter what the unbelievers think, write or say . . .

I will certainly pray for you that you will have better judgment of what is allowed to be in the Davenport Times.

(A lady from Edwall)

Questions And Answers

Here is a question that was sent to the Grand Coulee Star newspaper:—Have you heard anything about an amazing breakthrough in the fight against cancer?

Answer—Yes, and it's exciting news, indeed. Evangelist Oral Roberts has discovered the cause of cancer. The disease has 'a spiritual origin,' revealed the Oklahoma miracle worker. "When the cells of our bodies get out of spiritual order, they multiply and fill our bodies with cancer." Roberts told his television audience he was promised by God, in a seven-hour revelation, there would be a 'supernatural break-through for cancer' at the preacher's City of Faith Research Center in Tulsa. His plea for money to finish the research center brought in \$5 million from public-spirited listeners.

Dr. James Winslow, Jr., chief executive officer of City of Faith, has revealed the direction the research will take. "The Bible talks about a state of sin—sometimes called disorder—that is in the world," he said. "We happen to believe that God created the universe — he put the order into it. He did not likely put the disorder into it."

These revelations are the real breakthrough. They mean that individuals and government can now stop providing money to scientific charlatans who claim they are attempting to find the cure for cancer in the laboratory. How many millions have been squeezed out of frightened suckers in the misguided belief that science can find the cure for a disease that is a spiritual disorder? They might as well throw away their money on research to eradicate small pox, another disorder probably not put into the universe by God.

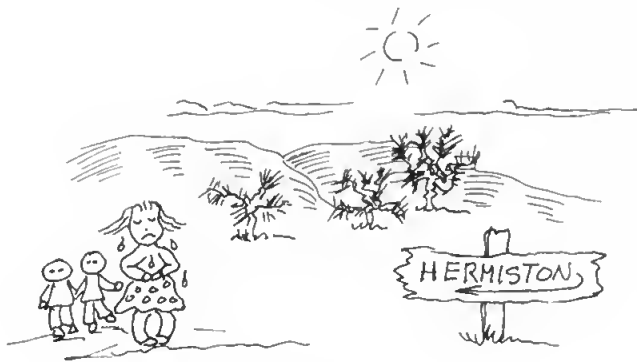
It's time to cut off this wasteful spending and put the money where it will do some good. President Reagan recently put his finger on the problem when he said that America's enemy within is 'modern-day secularism.' Write your Congressmen and tell them you will render no more unto Caesar for secular research. Then get out your checkbook and send a donation to the man who has God's word that He will cure cancer. The life you save may be your own.

An Undesirable Relative

I've been thinking back to those seven years that I had to spend in southern California. In the 1920s that part of the country wasn't as overloaded as it is now. The air was still air down there then, and people weren't so thick. Orange orchards had not been yanked out to make room for freeways and monotonous rows of houses. In those pre-Oral Roberts days, Aimee Semple McPherson

and her Angelus Temple were busy ruling the roost, 'til she used up all her magic charms.

Before Aimee was arrested, and before her sensational kidnapping trial, it was a big deal to drive over to the Angelus Temple with relatives that were 'gung-ho' on, Aimee McPherson. The temple did make you feel like



you were in heaven. Blue sky with lots of clouds were painted on the huge ceiling. Also angels were artfully painted as floating around in various places. When the band stopped banging away, Aimee in a white robe would make her grand entrance by descending down an open staircase that led to her throne-like pulpit. But it got to be kinda boring watching Aimee heal the stuttering, the deaf ones, and untangle a few contortionists.

When Aimee was at the height of her glory, my dad's brother-in-law, Emil Bell, and family were living in Hermiston, Oregon. He thought he was designed to be an evangelist. The bleak sagebrush hills of Hermiston caused Emil to think of a better place to start his mission of salvation. So he dumped my aunt and their two children permanently, and left for the fertile evangelistic soils of southern California. On his way, he picked up a tuneless singer who worked as a 'starter' just before Emil began his arm swinging sermons.

Of all things! When Emil got to Los Angeles, he thought he could get a job working for Aimee McPherson as some sort of come-on preacher that could help herd the stray ones into the Angelus Temple.

When Emil Bell realized he had to start from the bottom of that highly competitive evangelistic ladder, he parked himself at our place. After cussing the world out in general for being so wicked, Emil opened up a shop downtown, and held some revival meetings.

It was luck that my dad's brother-in-law got starved out, and left for other towns where picking was easier. There were just too many German Lutherans at Orange, and they gave him a rough time. Emil was a schemer, a womanizer, and a hypocrite.

After my inherited uncle left town, we as a family could once again enjoy evening strolls through the Plaza. A dandy place to meet friends and tourists. It was there that dad and I got acquainted with three Civil War veterans. Their hobby was to impress anyone who cared to listen to their Civil War tales.

When those old soldiers started piling up stories, dad and I noticed that two of those brass-button veterans had opposite viewpoints on how a certain battle was fought. It got to where they disagreed so hotly that verbal insults began flying back and forth. Finally they got up and started poking each other with their canes. Their cane battle



didn't last very long, because they ran out of breath from all the excitement. Those two never came back to the Plaza, thinking the other may be there.

The remaining veteran that stayed out of this ruckus, kept coming back to the same park bench. He then had a chance to tell his pet Civil War stories without being interrupted. He said the other two veterans were a couple of wind bags.

Even though this lonely Civil War guy was widowed, he wasn't burned out yet. Short skirts were making their first appearance in the 1920s. The sidewalks through the Plaza were full of pedestrians. One evening in the middle of this old guy's war story, a trim lady in a short dress passed by. His droning vocal sound ceased as his eyes followed the lady 'til she walked out of his line of sight. After depositing some tobacco juice on the lawn, he wiped his chin and said, "She's a darn good looker. Did you see her legs?"

Also at the Plaza, cults were found floating around quite a bit after the holiday season. A cowboy preacher and his wife came to the Plaza for a week of evening stays. On religious grounds, it seems like anybody could start up soap-box services.

This couple's outfit included a fancy car, with religious symbols painted on the fenders. One door had a painting of a redeemed cowboy roping a sinner.

About a couple of hours after sundown, this cowboy preacher and his mate would drive up to the Plaza, set up a table, and load it with trinkets that were made by semi-starving Indians from the Pueblo, Colorado district. A block like box was used as a pulpit.

His gimmick was to sell enough ornaments from the table to support his calling, and to buy some food for the starving natives down on the reservation.

The Rev. Cowboy wore nickel plated spurs, glass studded boots, a fancy silk shirt with lots of colors on it, and a cowboy hat that cost lots of bucks. It didn't seem like the holy team sold enough stuff to keep their equipment up to snuff.

His sermons were amusing and rather harmless. He wore dark glasses, even though the only thing shining were the Plaza street lights. His wife testified that the dark glasses were to help keep him from seeing the temptations of the world. I remember dad remarking to a friend, "is that the only way she can control him?"

The Aimee McPherson Show

I am mildly surprised at the interest there is in Aimee McPherson, especially since half of the population wasn't born yet when Aimee was putting on her show. She touched the lives of many sincere Inland Empire citizens that dug her Bible Barnum and Bailey style of antics. Radio was in its infancy when Aimee installed a radio station on top of her Angelus Temple in Los Angeles. It was powerful enough to penetrate a lot of old battery operated sets in Lincoln County. In fact it was Aimee's hanky-pankyness with her radio operator that eventually caused her downfall.

During Aimee's money making days she had customers from as far away as Rocklyn. In fact some took their ailments all the way down to the Angelus Temple for Aimee's touch of magic. They did receive strength enough to bring their ailing bodies back home.

After the turn of the century Los Angeles was notorious for its exotic cults. Aimee McPherson is best remembered of all such evangelists. Little old Aimee's life began in 1890 in Canada, finally wound up in China where her first husband expired. Upon returning to the States, she married Harold McPherson. That marriage ended in divorce when she turned to full time evangelism and healing.

Aimee was a dynamic and attractive woman. Fame, money, power, marital relationship, and that healing gimmick made her the center of attention. Highly successful she settled in Los Angeles where her followers put up a classy temple for their queen.

With the offstage help of her mother, 'Ma' Kennedy, Aimee conducted revival services in theatrical style, dressing to express the theme of her sermons. On one occasion Aimee rode a motorcycle down the aisle wearing a policeman's uniform for a speech on "God's Law."

Let's go back to 1926 when Aimee did a sensational five week disappearing act that brought grave charges against her. She must have figured she needed more notoriety. At one time 45 legal actions were pending against Aimee.

Aimee's biggest production got under way when she went for a dip in the Pacific ocean. Scene number two: Presto, she disappeared from the face of the earth. Five weeks later she was found stretched out horizontally on the edge of a desert asking for water. Aimee claimed she was kidnapped by two burly guys, and their girl friend, Rosie. They carted her off to the middle of the desert, and placed her in a small shack. When all the kidnappers went for canned goods, Aimee said she was able to chew her bindings off and took a 20 mile walk 'til she found a road to collapse on.

The prosecuting attorney's version of Aimee's escapades were slightly different. He figured she ran off with Armstead, her radio operator to shack up with him at a snazzy place called Carmel By The Sea.

Things did look a little fishy when Aimee wasn't dehydrated, and her shoes looked like they had only been worn on carpeted floors. Her tracks and the desert shack could never be found.

The events that followed turned into a three ring circus. All during Aimee's trial her followers put on a weekly parade through Los Angeles streets. One week a large float had Aimee humped under a cross. It was supposed to represent the persecution she was going through. Those scores of charges against Aimee turned into sort of a mistrial. It could have been caused by prosecuting attorney Asa Keys not keeping his nose clean. He was charged with some sort of wrong doings too, and had to set in jail for a while.

The trial shortened Aimee McPherson's career considerably. By 1942 the Temple had already begun to be just a tourist attraction. Aimee would perform but the dough didn't roll in bank vault style. She took to the road to spur interest.

My dad was in a small way fascinated by Aimee's showmanship. Sugar and I took him to hear Aimee for the last time in 1943 when she made a personal appearance at the Masonic Temple in Spokane. It wasn't long afterwards that Aimee Semple McPherson called it quits, and took an overdose of sleeping pills.

Reminiscing

The religious community that surrounds Sugar and me is part of our environment. Seems like at Christmas time, we are drawn back to take in a couple of Christmas presentations of religious value. When the church festival ends, social friendliness abides among the Christmas glitter. Season's greetings are exchanged verbally, usually for the last time before Christmas Eve arrives.

How fortunate that we live in a country where we can think and believe what we please. Why, away back there in the old country, for ages they spent lots of time blowing each other into oblivion over religion, and right now they are at it worse than ever.

Only time will tell what the New Year holds forth. I have always figured making New Year's resolutions was

for the birds. But I've got a habit that's out of control, so I'm willing to try anything that's a commitment to bolster my inner strength. Beginning January first, 1986, and to last as long as humanly possible, I resolve that I will not let Oral Roberts or any other 'way out' lucrative TV evangelist bug me anymore.

Sugar will have my blessing to switch stations when any of those guys with piercing eyes appears on our television tube. Why do these fellows upset me so? Guess I've been around too many of their kind.

My first association began during my early venture as a strawberry picker in California when I aided a tent toting evangelist. It was during the time when the sensational

Aimee McPherson disappeared from the face of the earth. It left her flock to carry on without a rudder.

This event caused religious fever to run high in certain groups. Aimee's Four Square Gospel stations were going full speed. Other satellite organizations also figured the time was ripe to do their thing. Since mother became entranced in fundamentalism, several dry run church type meetings were held in our house. When the test ended, the minister from mom's denomination figured it was the right time to contact a traveling evangelist, who had just finished lugging his folding tabernacle tent back from an Oregon crusade.

Upon contact, Evangelist Black agreed to take a chance at another crusade. This guy took a liking to me and gave me the opportunity to help him haul his tent down from Hemit to our place.

We had to wait a week for a Santa Ana wind to blow itself out. Then with the aid of my berry picking friends we were able to get that tangled mess of a tent erected. It wasn't a big circus tent like Oral Roberts used on his healing crusades across the country. It was a three center pole

affair that could hold up to 400 believers and sinners.

But things went haywire. Aimee McPherson showed up and blew it when she pulled out that rather bizarre kidnapping tale. After the authorities arrested her, it destroyed any possibility for Mr. Black to preach around a story of that magnitude. He settled for some leisure living up at his winter headquarters in Hemit.

The tent stood erected for several months. It proved to be more of a curiosity to passing local folks, than a place of redemption. Walt Knott on his daily drives to pick up berries never asked how come that oversized tent was parked on our property.

The tent was used for a while for Sunday School and occasionally church services. An old maid preacher would come up from Orange to explain her version of correct living.

When spring came, I returned this guy's tent and trailer. As a reward for my faithful service, he gave me a 1913 model T Ford that a believer donated to him and was left at our place. Part of this relic was used to restore our old Model T for my flight back to Washington.

A Debunker Speaks

1984 marked the 125th anniversary of the YWCA in the good old U.S.A. Their motto is: "125 years and still pioneering."

A person can't help but feel good all over about their imperative statement which was printed on that year's annual report cover. "—to thrust our collective power toward the elimination of racism wherever it exists, and by any means necessary."

This is quite a contrast from what is going on over in Idaho, where a so called Christian organization calls themselves Neo-Nazis. Their sworn duty is to keep the banner of race violence going at full blast. Just like what has been going on for ages.

On the bright side, the majority of us live with lots of love and tender care in our hearts, and wouldn't harm a soul intentionally. However, some of us did take up debunking. But the road of debunking can be a lonesome one. For every myth a person destroys can isolate a person from the community of believers. So it's best to settle down and respect the sacred beliefs of others.

But a few didn't care to give up that easily, and probably never will. For example: There is a predominate free thinking housewife, whose name is Ruth Miller. She has the ability to destroy myths. "Show me a dogma, and I'll tear it apart," she says.

For the benefit of her children, Ruth did return to the world of the church. "I tried the Baptist," she stated, "They worried too much about religion. Everyone in our family had only been born once."

Ruth then tried the Methodist. The first time her senior son questioned a contradictory verse, the Sunday School teacher announced the class wasn't considering Divine Revelation today.

Then she tried the Unitarians. There she thought she

found heaven on earth in the sanctuary of kindred souls. For a while Ruth was with glee in her new found community.

But it didn't take long for Mary to discover that the Unitarians welcome Humanists, and encourage them to hold membership in a liberal political party; . . . welcome atheists, especially if they support ERA . . . welcome Christians if they can learn to relax.

Not very well pleased, she looked at her primary source material and found out that her community of religious liberals contributes to a dogmatic political journal.

"Take note," Ruth said, "There is a debunker in your midst, and I intend to continue my lifestyle. This Unitarian is a registered Republican, anti-ERA, is supported by a military paycheck, and evil of evils, smokes in public!"

It's easy to see that no one denomination can please everyone. Maybe that's why there are so many different breeds of churches.

Whether you agree to disagree, college professors can also add food for thought. Chris Sublett, an art teacher out at Cheney is one of them. The professor became friends of the Jim Gooleys when Jo was one of his art students. This gave Chris a change to take loads of farm pictures out at the Gooleys, and Mielkes' farm. Later Sublett had his prize photos on display for a month in downtown Spokane, including a framed statement of knowledge, which read: 'If man's imagination were not so weak, so easily tired, his capacity for wonder not so limited, he would abandon forever his dreams of the Supernatural.

He would learn to perceive in water, leaves and silence more than sufficient of the absolute, and the marvelous, more than enough to console him for the loss of the ancient dreams."

Comments

A letter was written to a local newspaper stating that since I'm a Humanist, I need to be controlled on what I write. Please, let me make a few comments.

It's sort of silly to separate ourselves from becoming one family, because of personal beliefs. The modern dictionary joins us all together. Christians: "Exhibiting a spirit proper to a follower of Christ, as in having a loving regard for other persons, etc." Humanist: "A person having strong interest in or concern for human welfare, value, dignity, etc."

Except for the spiritual differences, we are all working for the same human needs. For those that think it's naughty to be a humanist, let's see how some of them survived.

In 1970, Vice President Walter Mondale, was a featured speaker at the Quadrennial Congress of the International Humanist and Ethical Union. Mondale stated in that speech: "Although I have never joined a humanist society, I think I am a member by inheritance. My preacher father was a humanist . . . I grew up on a very rich diet of humanism from him. All of our family have been deeply influenced by this tradition including my brother Lester, Unitarian Minister, and Chairman of the Fellowship of Religious Humanists."

After Mondale's speech, Dr. Barry Commoner received the International Humanist of the Year Award.

Scientist Carl Sagan won the same award two years before.

A lot of frothing anti-Humanists won't like Walter Mondale's record. Still we have a lot to be thankful for, because the mainstream Christians and Jewish bodies are not bigoted.

Mondale is a Methodist, and likely a very humanistic one. Adlai Stevenson, a staunch Unitarian, took out a Presbyterian membership.

This proves that inter-mixing of beliefs does happen, and it works for the good. If any person's personal belief is a threat to others, then that person is not sure of his or her own beliefs.

Thomas Jefferson, a free thinker, and a Unitarian all his life, never found his beliefs a hinderance when it came to writing up the Constitution.

Our beloved President Kennedy, a good Catholic, also proved his fairness by respecting all religions of the world. The church and state was not threatened in Kennedy's days like it is now.

Ronald May of Moscow, Idaho, made this statement: "Surely Christians and Humanists alike would rather live in a world where the assurance that all men and women have food, clothing, and shelter, is far more important than their beliefs."

Mythology

Recently Sugar and I heard a speaker, speaking on mythology. He said that certain myths can help make facing life a little easier. Gosh, I didn't know that. Maybe it does, by making the hard truth more pliable to live with. I do enjoy some of the folklore that's still floating around our environment, that is, if it's not too heavily loaded with superstition. About all of our folklore and what nots, were brought over from the 'old country' by our dear departed immigrants. Seems like the Indians got by with less mythical ideas.

First, let's take a look at water witching. It's a witch craft hang-up from the deepest past, and is very stubborn in leaving. Let's hope that such irritating nonsense will soon fade away. All it takes is for the younger generation to tell the old man he's all wet.

Superstition can be more harmful than myth, yet at times it can be amusing. Sugar and I, in our younger days, used to throw straight-type house parties. A Friday the 13th was arriving close to our scheduled party time. A brainstorm hit me, why not set the party date 24 hours earlier and have more fun? We could have a mirror busting party, and place a ladder against the wall for the purpose of guests passing under it during a circle game. At lunchtime, our old pet cat could have been drug across each one's path as they went for snacks.

What a dream! I contacted a neighbor to see what he thought of a Friday the 13th party. He didn't think it was

such a hot idea. So Sugar suggested I'd better drop the 'spook type' party, as she had no desire to help entertain an empty house.

Superstition can also be a chore of rearranging things. Years ago, a pioneer family of great hospitality had us for dinner. It turned out there were 13 hungry bodies waiting to be fed at a large harvest sized table. Quickly, plates were shuffled in such a way that one plate ended up at the kitchen counter where a member of the family was guided to eat. A question was asked why the segregation of the one person, when there was room at the table. We were told of an incident where a guy died later, after 13 were seated for dinner.

That theory didn't hold water. Since our gathering at that dinner of 12, plus one off in the distance, three have since gone to their permanent resting places.

Beliefs should never be challenged when one is sincere. For example, a friendly friend of ours, who for months had regular gall bladder attacks, but always got healed from pain after asking the good Lord for relief. Her Maker came to the rescue so many times, that she started to feel quite guilty. When the final gall bladder attack flared up, this suffering individual said, "No more was I going to overwork my Maker, so right up to the hospital I went." After the sack of troublesome stones was removed, the Lord was able to get more rest. We all had to respect this lady's none-demanding attitude.

Puppy Love

Sugar and I have been watching a weekly TV story that involved teenagers living in present times. What they are learning now days about love and sexuality is probably long overdue. Let's hope they will all find happiness in their search for solid mates.

Before maturity set in, and Sugar entered my life, culture was one heck of a lot different than it is now. I suppose anyone around my age would have similar stories to tell.

I have no idea what road I'd have taken in these modern days of fast mores. One cannot regret the slow pace of the past that some of us followed. Although there were times in my early life that I envied the more aggressive friends, or should I say, the more matured ones.

The fact that girls were different hit me before I could grow whiskers successfully. Puppy love entered my mind while I was still stuck in Orange, California. A Menonite church was only a block away. The sight of a bobbed haired girl by the name of Lilly Skiles, drew me through the doors of this religious order.

Inside the quaint church, I found it loaded with sincere worshippers. It took me quite a while to get used to their style of faith. The Evangelicals I grew up with out here at Rocklyn had a different approach in seeking Christian comfort.

Instead of communion, the Menonites took turns washing each other's feet up on the pulpit platform. Pans filled with water were lined up alongside of chairs that were used for sitting purposes during this kind of ritual. Usually they would utter a lot of religious jollies as their feet were being scrubbed.

The Menonite girls took a shy approach to new friends. It lent a certain sweetness to their simple beauty. With the girls not expecting anything great, it allowed us equally slow guys to coast along in our own fantasy world.

During the height of my love sickness for that Menonite girl, I was not able to function properly from Monday until the next Sunday morning. It was impossible to see Lilly in person during the week, because she attended high school while I was trying to sweat out my last term in grade school.

However, some week day nights were spent on Newport Beach with Lilly. No there weren't any romantic interludes. I was always with a group of Menonite young people. We would build a bonfire on the beach, and when the moon came up, fish about the size of smelts would bounce up onto the beach. I guess they were all female fishes, because they would wiggle in to the sand, and make a hole with their bellies to lay their eggs in.

While the fishes were busy doing their thing, the fun was to pick them up, and throw them into a sack for eating purposes later on. (Sounds fishy, doesn't it? That's because you haven't been around.)

Usually, I got to hold the flashlight and sack for Lilly as she picked up those fish called grunians. Fun ran high when we got slapped by a wave as we tried to grab the last of these fish that were trying to make it back to their ocean home.

Drifting away from this Sunday group was rather painful for me. Older guys with automobiles had the advantage. A guy with a car started taking Lilly out for rides. Moving out to the ranch, and working for Walt Knotts didn't help me forget her. She had a brother that was going with my sister. He would drive out to the ranch quite often, and that didn't help matters either.

Thirty-four years ago, Lilly came up to Washington with her husband, and visited with my sister, and me, also Sugar. I asked her if she really knew how gung ho I was about her. She not only remembered, but also felt sorry for all the insecure frustrations I had. After all these years, wasn't that sweet of her to have felt sorry for me?

Those Old California Days

Time can wipe out a lot of the old scenic past, especially in Southern California. Lots of people are the reason. When you get too many in one place, it changes the texture of the country. It was kind of risky showing Sugar all the places that I used to roam in my Model T while living in Orange and Norco. There are just too many freeways down there that have too many cars on them. It scares the heck out of a guy.

While cruising on top of the freeways, I could see down below that rooftops have replaced orange groves and walnut trees. A spot where I used to pick watermelons and berries now has a replica of Independence Hall setting on it. Tourists and sightseers have also filled in the rest of the familiar haunts. The location where our old ranch was, is now plugged up with houses filled with people who got squeezed out of Los Angeles.

In the 1920s the interesting part about that section of human growth was that everyone was anxious to survive

a little better there than the place they came from. That Norco district was the brain storm of promoter, Rex B. Clarke. Folks that bought in there had to lower their sights somewhat, and lived with the feeling that a person might in time get ahead of the other fellow.

All at once I got to thinking, what am I doing here? My only hope of getting back to Washington was that dad might go broke as a self appointed realtor. He often said that if he had to carry a lunch pail, he would come back to the farm. When mother never showed signs of putting up lunch for him, my hopes faded and there was nothing else to do but sweat it out for a while longer.

Making it through the last year in California was eased somewhat when our house started filling up with relatives or friends that were either visiting or looking for an opening themselves. What also helped me a lot was when an old guy by the name of Dave Robinson and his invalid wife became our neighbors.

Old man Robinson traded his self sufficient plot of Ozark land in Arkansas for a piece of sun baked ground next to ours. It had a cottage and a chicken house full of chickens on it. The adult chickens were supposed to supply enough eggs so these two oldsters from Arkansas could survive and enjoy sunny California. That's what they were told by a fast talking real estate guy.

As soon as Mr. Robinson got there, he ordered a replacement batch of chicks and watched them grow up to egg laying size. Even though all his chickens laid good sized eggs, they never paid for their keep

I had a lot in common with old man Robinson. I was raising ducks on the side because I liked ducks. But my kind of ducks didn't like California weather, even with the large pond I installed for their benefit. We both suffered economical disaster together. Liquidation took place without filing bankruptcy.

This caused homesickness to set in on Dave Robinson. Only in his daily dreams was he able to have hopes of getting his Ozark place back. Down deep he knew he was too old to do anything about it. He always felt better when he would tell us what a Garden of Eden the Ozarks was, but at the same time it brought tears to his eyes.

Dave would explain how self sufficient life was there. When he needed a hog to eat on, all he had to do was to go out into the woods and shoot at a razorback. Berries of all kinds were there on the slopes for the picking. When fall came, he and his wife would go out in the open with a couple of sacks and gather wild nuts and other edible things. Except for chewing tobacco he bought very little at the general store.

Since there were no wild nuts to gather or razorback hogs to shoot at in California, Dave asked Mr. Knott for a job. He became our eldest worker there.

Dave loved to pick berries, but weeds grew quite well between the strawberry rows. This required a lot of hoeing. Dave tired of that job quite easily, and spent too much time sitting down to sharpen his hoe. The boss came by one day and found Dave's hoe razor sharp and he was told it didn't need any more sharpening. Knott



"Ozark" Robinson and his invalid wife.

didn't mean to overwork the old guy, but he was not a fellow to let anyone goof off or file their hoe down to the handle.

How Dave longed worse than ever to be back in those self supplying hills of the Ozarks where he could sharpen his hoe for as long as he wanted to. It certainly would have been smart of him if he had made a scouting trip out to California first. He would have known whether he could sustain a successful retirement life outside of his environment. Many happily can, but old man Robinson couldn't.

Social Justice

When Horace Mann got all through living, he had this message written on his tombstone: "Be ashamed to die, until you have won some victory for humanity."

Thankfully, we have people that work for humane causes of the underprivileged. Former news editor, Terri Roloff-Warrington of Wilbur had done her bit for humanity. Terri spent six weeks working in an orphanage, away down in Cuernavaca, Mexico, somewhere south of Mexico City.

It looks like the younger folks throughout the nation are our main hope for social justice. Just attend some of the caring organizations, and you will find out it's true.

All the recent happenings remind me of the race favoritism that took place over 60 years ago in Southern California. Part of our eight years spent in the south were at Orange. We located ourselves on the edge of a Mexican settlement, where my dad built a house.

When we moved to a so called California ranch, our house was rented out to a Mexican family. In less than a week, a pure white racist guy put dynamite under our house. It had a long fuse sticking out from under the porch, so our renters could see the danger they were in if they stayed there. Naturally, the family took a powder, and left the house very empty.

A lot of Mexicans lived three blocks from our Orange house. A German guy moved into this neighborhood, and married a Mexican lady with a pile of kids. He was a Methodist minister that loved to sing in Spanish, German, and English.

From a few donations, and a long standing mortgage, a small church of Spanish design was built. The preacher tried to inter-mix the races by inviting the well heeled German folks from the outer circle to join them in worshipping together.

But that idea fell flat on its face, and the church went down the drain. The last time Sugar and I visited that spot of little Mexico, the windowless church was used as a playhouse by little Chicanos.

But the minister did win a victory for humanity. He got a job at the old Fig Nut Food Factory in Orange, and spent his vacation time south of the border helping the poor.

When my mother was buried at Orange, the undertaker warned dad and I that the plot we chose was located where Mexicans were allowed to be buried. So on resurrection day in that district, the road to heaven will be of mixed race.

Before our sojourn to the south, Herman Bakenhus, a pioneer Rocklyn farmer, moved part of his large family to Garden Grove. Bakenhus encouraged dad to buy a bare piece of land in that town.

Over at Long Beach, a lot of small houses were in

the way of the newly drilled oil well holes. Those houses were available just for the moving expense. Some of them found their way to dad's and Bakenhus' lots, and they were sold to Mexican workers.

It wasn't long after we left the country, that the Mexicans were kicked out of town to make room for the 'preferred' race. Recently, a preacher who has a lot of class, moved into that territory. He built a spiritual tower out of glass, that holds many classy people and tourists during his services.

A Spanish friend at Orange by the name of Alphonso Silvanis, did his bit for humanity. He and his family bought a house in the snooty part of town. When his job transferred him to Los Angeles, he let a Mexican family live in his house.

Alphonso told his neighbors they were relatives of his. By the time word got out that they were Mexican, the neighbors learned to love them. So the placing of dynamite under the house was not necessary.

When Radio Was Born

Gosh, what an informative world we live in now days. Radio and television help to make that possible. If you can't be home for your favorite TV program, just snap on a gismo that will record it for you, then at your leisure, play it back.

Public television station KSPS is loaded with goodies that will feed knowledge into all of us. Other stations also have documentary stuff like 20-20 and Sixty Minutes. Discussion groups such as the Donahue show will keep us all in touch with life as it is today. For variety, tune in on a story or a show of your choice.

Before the 1920s, there were no pictures or voices traveling through the air, just a lot of dots and dashes that could be translated into words. When music and voices entered the air waves, pictures were missing for the first 30 years. Merging of the two didn't take place here in eastern Washington 'til 36 years ago when KHQ Channel 6 was born.

A lot of us 'over the hill' folks were ahead of our times and had to wait quite a while for radio to be invented. When radio finally entered the air waves, I was phasing out my meager education down south. My neighbor Sammie Lough and I got hooked on making crystal sets. Our manual training teacher taught us how. It made us feel smart, so we decided to make a bunch of sets. When my tent-bedroom became our assembly plant, Sammie and I went scavaging for every empty round oatmeal box we could find. After wrapping scads of wire around these boxes, they worked as tuning coils. Crystal sets required no electrical energy. A small crystal rock worked as an amplifier when a connecting piece of wire about the thickness of a cat whisker was poked manually into a sensitive spot on the rock. Then whamo! our ear phones would bring in a lot of stuff and things if the sliding oatmeal boxes were tuned into the right place.

Those little sets worked like magic. The town of Orange was just the right distance for picking up big time stuff out of Los Angeles. But our business of making crystal sets was short-lived. A few neighbors bought some just

to make us happy. Competition from three-tube radio kits, and factory built radios made our ear phone sets just kid stuff.

KNX was one of the earliest radio stations that went on the air. At first stations played mostly music, and straight man comedy sketches. The first news was done by going out and buying the latest edition from a street vendor, then reading the juiciest parts over the radio. Later news was picked up by direct wire, like when President Harding got sick and died on his trip back from Alaska. Radio beat the press release by a couple of hours. The air waves worked like Paul Revere in spreading the death of Harding.

Things happened fast. The next thing that came up was when ex-vice president Coolidge made it live on radio. He had a few things to say about taking over the White House. Boy was that a thrill! Hearing a president coming through a loud speaker when he was so far away.

That was the beginning of a lot of radio firsts. A swimmer from Canada by the name of George Young swam from Catalina Island to the mainland. That event was broadcast live from the shore line of San Pedro. It was late into the night when George staggered out of the ocean on his set of wobbly legs. That event to us listeners was just like being right there.

Long before Amos and Andy came over the radio, two Los Angeles churches were broadcasting their services. Aimee McPherson had a radio station built right onto her Angeles Temple. Bob Schuler the Methodist minister down there, did his broadcasting over a commercial radio. - Bob is no ancestor of Robert Schuller who now preaches from a huge glass cage in Garden Grove.

At the height of Aimee's popularity she started using a lot of red headed beauties dressed in white. Their duty was to place patrons properly in an empty seat and to take up the collection in gold colored velvet bags. Schuler's broadcast church services were good and within

the normal range of Christian ethics. But after hearing of Aimee's new attraction, Schuler advertised over the radio that he too was going to have all red headed ladies as ushers. Rev. Bob also promised that everyone would receive the same courtesy that Aimee was dishing out.

The power of radio made Bob about equal with Aimee. But when we moved back from California, we couldn't receive Bob Schuler by radio at all, while Aimee McPherson's radio station came in loud and clear. So in the long run Bob lost out to Aimee when it came to coverage and popularity.

Growing Years Of Radio And TV

August 30, 1927, was a day I'll never forget. We were all ready to abort our California ranch for the migration back to Washington. Our furniture was shipped ahead days before. The three-tube radio was packed carefully in one of Mom's large dresser drawers. My stripped down Model T and the folks' Essex were pointed north for some picture taking.

Soon a trail of dust was left behind, as sister and I took the lead down the road that eventually lead us back to our Washington farm.

It took 10 days to make it up to about the Washington State line. We made a big deal out of surprising a lot of relatives on our way up to Hermiston. From there to Walla Walla would be another nest of related people to see. Any more visiting at that critical time was out for me. I was too close to the farm that I had been longing for so long to plant my feet on. After sister found room in the folks' overloaded Essex, I beat it across the border, and was delayed only by the limited output of the Model T in getting back to where I belonged.

Excitement ran high inside my body. Before the folks got here, I was able to put kalsomine on the walls of the main rooms. Got some furniture unpacked and put where I figured mom wanted it. The Crosley radio was placed in a good listening area. Even had time to string up antenna wire that reached from the blacksmith shop to the house before the folks' car arrived in the yard.

It was a surprise to find out that the early day radio stations up here had established a service for the farmers. While seeding winter wheat that fall, it was neat walking into the house at supper time, and listening over the radio whether wheat was a decent price or not. Also the weather forecast was given by the best methods they had in those days.

It wasn't long before I sent to Chicago for a super powered eight tube radio kit. When I screwed it all down on a long board it really looked massive and impressive. A front panel held three large tuning rigs with their dials. A couple of double action volume controls that were at arms length apart. Also some unnecessary gismos like a glass tube that would glow in a flash-like fashion if lightning got pretty close. The 'build it yourself radio' was really a table model monster that would have overpowered any living room. I gave it to neighbor Wood Hulburt, so he could watch the working wonders of radio as he listened to what ever he wanted to listen to.

As time passed, programs through telephone hook-ups got better. Many of the weekly aired shows are now classics. Early local talent on a weekly base was Davenport's 'Tumbling Tumble Weeds' Boyk sisters. They sang western songs that pleased the Northwest.

During this period, radio sets were coming off the assembly line with multiple tubes and cabinets as big as some TV consoles, minus the picture tube. To run these sets it took a couple of heavy duty six volt wet batteries. One was needed to light up the tubes while the other battery would be in town getting a charge of electricity. Also needed to operate those radios were two sets of 45 volt dry cell batteries, and a small package of C batteries. It was a portable power plant all its own, making it possible for radio to reach out into space to bring in all that music, and audio events.

Before the war years, it was interesting how false advertising was used over the air. To sell a certain brand of radio, the announcer would state to this effect, "Be sure and buy this radio, it has a five year in advance plug-in for television." The illusion given was when television arrived, you just placed the picture tube on top of the radio and plugged it in.



August 30, 1929, leaving Aunti Lou and the California ranch for the trek back to Racklyn.



September 24, 1929, arrived at our very vacant farmstead, minus one headlight.

After the war it was rumored that soon television would arrive, but it took 'til 1950 before it got to Spokane. Like a nut I sent to Seattle for a console TV set, and had it sitting in the living room for three months before a test pattern was ever sent out in our direction. Guess I just wanted to be ready.

The neighbors played it cool and didn't start buying TV sets that winter. But they did want to see what was going on inside the picture tube. We had two steady sets of neighbors making it here for their favorite weekly TV shows.

The Monday nighters came to watch wrestlers slam each other around. With a little fantasy instead of reality, that group got entertained to their satisfaction. The Wednesday nighters came to see Groucho Marx "Bet

Your Life" and usually stayed 'til TV went off the air. For Sugar and me that winter turned into a local social event. Sugar made and served so darn many cookies that I had the beginnings of a lump in front of my stomach.

When neighbors started buying their own television sets, I took a quick course in TV repair and bought meters and lots of other fix-em stuff. But after years of bringing dead TV sets back to life in the surrounding country side, it got to be old stuff. Now days with remote control, solid state, trouble free TVs, it's time for me to just sit back and enjoy these electronic marvels. Ever since the crystal set days, my love affair with radio and TV may explain why I have a TV set in every room except the bathroom, and that's because it's just used mostly during the commercials.

How To Lose A Farm

From riches to hitting the gospel trail. That's what happened to a family I knew very well. The pioneer, father of this family lost his shirt and all the rest of his earthly possessions to a bunch of smooth talking swindlers, who sold worthless mining stock to prime rated farmers. The gold colored certificates looked impressive. The suckers names were stamped in raised letters, right under a special seal. I understand some of these certificates are still around. They are collectors items by now.

Why did a lot of early day farmers fall for those dressed up crooks? The main reason was, they were too busy making a decent living the hard way, - by working. Their spare time was spent siring, and raising many children. It left them little time to study a dishonest person.

Those pioneer farmers should have been left alone. Green as grass to the outside world, they became sitting targets for fly-by-night slickers with oily tongues. Those crooked mining stock salesmen convinced Herman Bursch and a half dozen of his neighbors that they were too smart to be out farming in all that cold weather.

"Look how far you came without an education," they were told. "Just put your brains to work. Invest in the King Gold and Copper Mines' and you will become a capitalist."

It sounded pretty neat to Herman, and some of his well healed neighbors. Those that were taken, turned their farm holdings into stacks of mining stocks.

Good old trusting Herman Bursch then leaned back and began waiting for dividends from the sales of gold bars to set in. Meanwhile, the loan company figured waiting for Mr. Bursch's royalties to show up was for the birds. He was stripped of his earthly possessions, except for part interest in the Rocklyn Farmers Warehouse that the mining salesmen accidentally overlooked.

It was hard for the Bursch family to leave such a show place. Many a camp meeting was held in their well publicized grove. The clan was able to salvage some horses and a scattering of farm machinery. Herman, his wife and the married and the unmarried part of the family

migrated up to the Rocklyn railroad tracks, where they moved into a couple of vacant farm houses.

In the early 1930s times were tough. The family tried to resurrect one of the vacant farms. The next year, their old wooden Harrington Harvester had a rough time cutting the rented eight bushel spring wheat crop. That fall, the family ended their last stand as farmers.

Deeply religious all his life, Herman Bursch raised his family to follow the narrow path. He was a man that never carried any ill feelings. He did however figure the world was wicked. After all he lost his fortune to guys that didn't act like Christians.

Herman was terribly worried about Italian dictator

Benito Mussolini. He was sure Mussolini would stick around long enough to fulfill some Bible prophecy. That was before some Italian countrymen hung the stuttering dictator from the ceiling of a service station. Always sincere about his convictions, I didn't mind listening to his ideas of what he thought was in store for the world in general.

Herman's two oldest sons, Chester and Archie heeded a sincere conviction to take up evangelistic work and spread the gospel of salvation. Roy Warwick, a self appointed minister of the same faith, joined the two rookie evangelists as a helper. Ritzville was to become their first main crusade.

A Mini Crusade

The Crusade that took place in Spokane out at the Joe Albi stadium several years ago far outdid the one I took part in 55 years ago. Actually I was just a flunky, helping out with some transportation and entertaining the preacher's pre-school kids.

The winter of 1931-32 was one heck of a winter to start any kind of a Crusade. Snow fell and drifted on Thanksgiving Day. When December arrived, most of the country roads were plugged with snow. By midwinter, drifts got high enough to bury our chicken house.

Two weeks before Christmas that rough winter, my three friends with a message, Chester, Archie, and Roy Warwick started their Crusade in Ritzville. A pulpit and some benches went with the vacant building that was located in the old part of downtown Ritzville. Upstairs was a place for eating, sleeping, and preparing sermons. It was pretty crowded when guests arrived for a stay. Chester was married and had started a family, also Roy. Archie was single which helped a lot for space.

After cards were printed and an outdoor banner was made, the Crusade was ready to get going. Snow storms isolated the two evangelists' parents that were stuck up here at Rocklyn. Herman and his wife wanted so badly to get in on the beginning of the revival.

Herman was too scared to drive his car down to Ritzville in all that ice, snow and fog. I was asked to be their chauffeur. The Ritzville road was blocked at Harrington. Detouring around by Sprague was no jollies. In those days, windshields had no defrosters. The only remedy was for me to stick my head out of the window and let it freeze 'til Ritzville was reached.

I was so cold that night that I stood down in front by the wood burning stove all during the evening services. What few attended the meeting thought I couldn't wait for the altar call.

It was nice visiting with my friends. They looked about the same, except they wore suits all day long. Visiting about farming days and why they took up gospel work was the main topic. Except for emptying out the collection box, picking up some groceries, straightening the outside banner up and sweeping out the hall, there wasn't much to do. The gospel car was available if I cared to visit relatives, but the country roads held too much snow.

The scattering of attendants got their money's worth. Chester the friendly one, Archie the more serious one, and Roy the handsome, jolly guy made quite a trio. They had a double feature going on the same bill each night. Both Chester and Roy delivered their own style of sermons. Archie inherited a good set of lungs, and did a lot of solo singing. On the tail end of the services, Archie's singing voice blended in with the altar call. The senior Bursch, Herman, acted as a receptionist and later a seeker of prospective souls.

Several calm days rose the attendance about 30. Then the wind started to whistle around that old building that saw better times. The turn out dropped to about zero. My friends began looking like a bunch of missionaries stranded on a deserted island. They decided to stick it out, and I started to get homesick. I had no desire to stay and see if their prayers were going to get answered for better weather and larger crowds.

The wind quieted down the next morning, so it gave me a chance to head for home on foot. Did catch a ride to Tokio. From then on the road was blocked. Had one heck of a time walking through drifts and snow swept grades. First stop was Harrington for a rest at a service station. From there on, it was more dragging my feet through crusted snow 'til Rocklyn was reached.

Sure was mighty glad to get home that night, where I could once again listen to Amos and Andy on the radio.



Dad, mom and sis filled me in on all the things that happened while I was cavorting around with the messengers of faith.

What happened to part of the Bursch family? Well they didn't make the big time circuit, but stayed loyal to

their convictions. Herman and wife Minia are all gone now. So is Archie from a heart condition. Chester and wife Eleanor are retired and living in Spokane. Roy Warwick was up from California visiting with friends and relatives. Herman's grandson, Merrill Womach, is a well known gospel singer in Spokane.

Comments

After writing the Bursch articles, memories and local chit-chat caused a hankering to go see the survivors of the 'Ritzville Crusaders from Rocklyn'. That's what Sugar and I did. We drove out to the house that belongs to Chester and Eleanor Bursch.

Even though we lived under the same clouds for fifty years, our paths went in different directions. Except for some brief visiting at gravesides when an old Rocklyn citizen was laid away, we never had a good old fashioned visit 'til Sunday.

I'm glad to report that Chester is 88 years old now, and very alert, and so is Eleanor. Wally Knack had given them a copy of the Davenport times that had the "Old Time Religion Crusade" in it. So it was easy to slide into events of bygone days with the Burschs. Eleanor even remembered the name of a young lady down at Ritzville

that I enjoyed visiting with after the evening evangelistic services came to an end.

Chester believes that the emotional stress of losing the family farm, and the loss of a twelve year old son in a farming accident, shortened his father's life considerably. Those that remembered Herman, knew that he was a sincere and progressive man.

Brooms must have been a popular housewife's weapon in those early days. Since penning the Bursch story, I've been told of two cases where wives of prospective victims took after those mining swindlers with a broom.

All in all, it was an afternoon of delightful reminiscing. Usually postponing a visit, wipes out that opportunity.

Note: Since the above writing was written, Chester Bursch and Roy Warwick have passed away.

Traps Swindlers Used

There is much less reason for being conned out of money today, than when our dear departed loved ones were trying to make a living. Yet, idle savings can still get washed away. Who thought that Washington Public Power Supply System would fall flat on its face? Well it did, and many lost some dough. But WPPSS was not a swindle. It was something like gambling at Las Vegas.

The story about Herman Bursch losing his farm to gold mine swindlers, opened up a whole can of worms. Stories from every direction came in about broken dreams, caused by money being transferred from pioneer farmers to empty gold mine holes.

I even received information on that religious cult Peterson who promised power from God instead of high-octane to run his faith operated airplanes. I was told where I can locate some of the stock certificates that this false prophet sold to gung-ho believers.

Last spring, the Mielkes rifled through an old family trunk. Their findings were like an empty gold mine filled with old worthless mining stock certificates. However, through long years of aging in the trunk, the certificates did grow to some value as souvenirs. The trunk also revealed that their dad's financial loss was more devastating than realized. If it hadn't been for a caring relative who stayed out of those 'gold rush' days, the Mielke foundation would have collapsed.

I also found out from Chester Bursch how the swindlers used a front to squeeze more money out of the involved stock holders. Broken down machinery was dumped by the hole in the mountain, and a bunch of un-

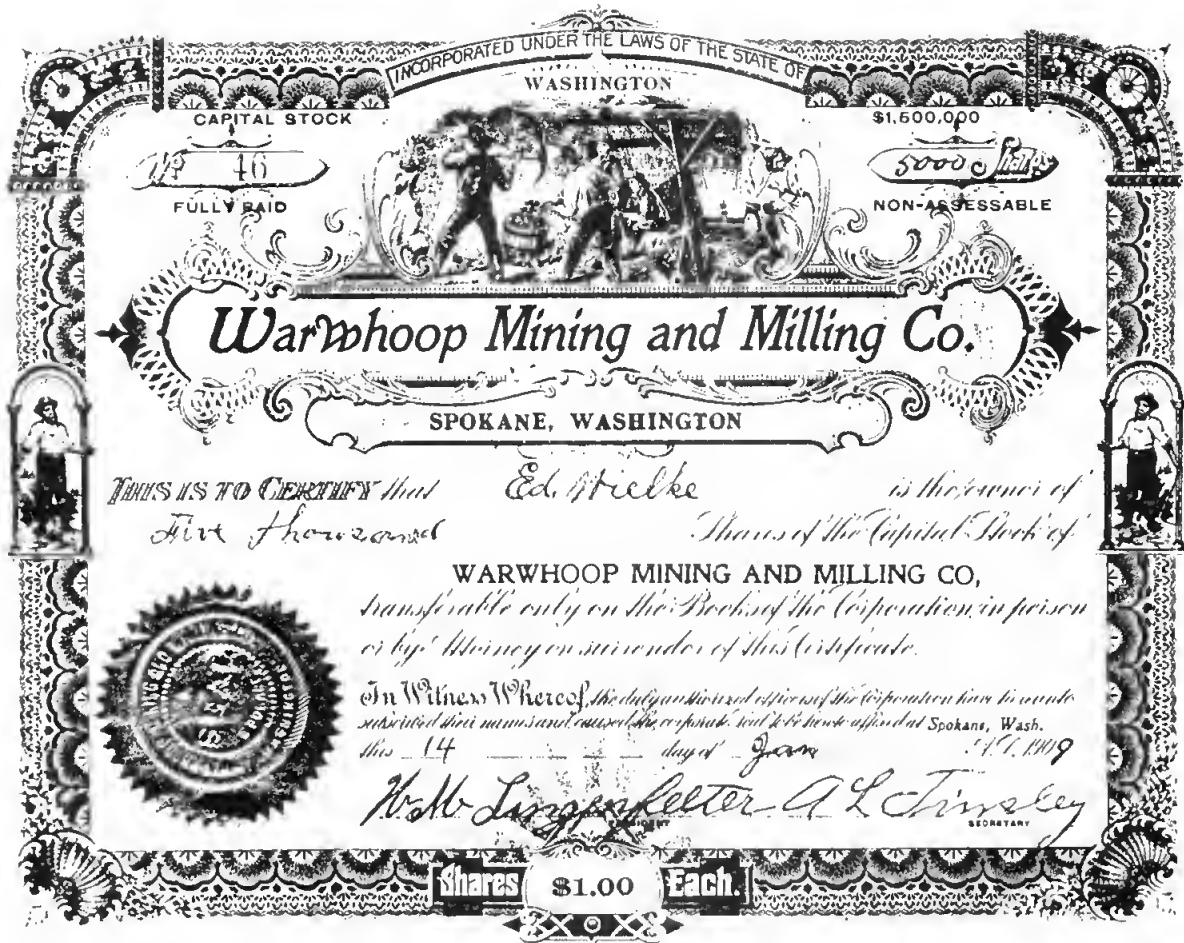
employed men were herded up to the site. The scene was just right when the worried backers arrived. An spokesman for the swindlers made a statement in these relative terms, "All we need is a little more money to fix up this ready to go machinery, and to get these professional miners you see standing here, back to work. Nuggets can then be hauled out and turned into cash."

Herb Kruger remembers as a young fellow that he went up to one of the mines with a local group of financial backers. To stimulate more interest in the sales of stock, hand shovels were used to square up a vertical surface on the side of the mountain. When a roof like mining entrance was put up, the promoters went back home. From the road below, it looked like a real mine entrance that extended back into the bowels of the mountain.

Even oil swindlers got into the act. This summer I received a copy of an original oil promotion letter. It was sent through the mail on Dec. 26, 1907 as sort of a Christmas present. The idea was to catch all the suckers that lived throughout the Inland Empire, and to drain them of their cash. The letter reads as follows:

Dear Sir:- Herewith we hand you a deed to a lot in the town of Waukesha, Wash., and take this opportunity of calling your attention to important developments about to take place there . . . Aside from establishing a health resort at Waukesha the promoters expect to develop power for commercial purposes at Lake Creek Falls. This in itself will make Waukesha an important point.

We have also indications of petroleum, which led to the recent incorporation of the Waukesha Oil Company,



capitalized at \$1,000,000 . . . The company has already purchased a complete oil drilling outfit. This drill will be operated night and day by expert men from the oil fields of Pennsylvania.

The Waukesha Oil Co., will give you a lot and 40 shares of stock in the Company for \$10., 10 lots and 400 shares for \$100. When the Company strikes oil or gas the

person securing 5 or 10 lots will own sufficient ground to have a flowing well worth \$5,000 to \$20,000, besides shares in the Company. Do you want to share in this enterprise? Oil has made many millionaires, among them the richest man in the world, John D. Rockefeller.

For further information address the Waukesha Oil Company, 14 Bernard Street, Spokane, Washington.

Early Farm Achievers

Well, another year has brought another end to the Lincoln County Fair. Many a four legged animal that won blue ribbon awards profited nothing since they will meet sudden death. All because a lot of us haven't broken the meat eating habit. Chewing on a prize winning steak is a big deal to everyone but the steer.

On the humane side, it's the prizes human beings receive that are not forgotten. Every year, awards are given for the Farmer of the Year, and the Cattleman of the Year. It's the progressive winners that give the rest guidelines to follow, usually on a simpler scale.

In the pioneer days, what encouraged farmers to improve themselves? The same as today. They wanted the best that was available. Some inherited the ability to do something about their lot in life, and invented their own improvements.

It's kinda interesting going over early day achievement records of soil tillers. The thought that lots of pro-

gressive farmers were first in many things amazes a lot of us living in this mechanized, and computerized age.

Every community in Lincoln County had their early progressive settlers. West of Davenport was no exception. There were at least a dozen old timers that were eligible for the 'pioneer farmer of the century award.' There would have been more, but a lot of ambitious settlers decided to settle for large families instead of indulging in the luxury of self improvements.

Others like George Sweezy never had a chance. He was a highly educated farmer in his time. George had ideas that needed capital investments. Most farmers didn't go along with his enlightened ideas, because they couldn't see farther than the end of their noses. A good leader, George always kept his cool, and could figure things out in a reasonable way. He had great ability to improve his lot in life, but the thin layer of soil on his Rocklyn farm couldn't support his advanced improvments.

And so goes the list of sharp old timers that missed the boat slightly. However, there is reason to believe that the outgrowth from the pioneer Maurer stock contributed to the genius of one Mike Maurer. I'm sure Mike would have beat out any present day 'farmer of the year,' simply because he was ahead of his time. His farm was the show place of Rocklyn.

Blunt, and sometimes noisy when he got wound up, Mike was a friendly guy. An ardent reader of current events, Maurer and George Sweezy organized the Literary Society. It helped educate the surrounding neighbors who usually depended only on a small weekly German newspaper, and some Sunday School literature. Mike's discussions always added food for thought, whether it be politics, religion, or methods of farming.



The progressive farmer, Mike, in later life.

Dad, and Mike Maurer were brother-in-laws. When they got together, ninety percent of their time was spent arguing. Usually they were very uncomfortable if they could not find something to argue about. Mike had the advantage over dad, because he was well versed in many subjects. Dad had to rely on common sense to outsmart him.

From 1900 to 1920, any traveler passing by the M. F. Maurer farm in late summer would think they were in Iowa. Acres of mule high corn stretched out along the roadside for over a half mile. A large round silo stood taller than the typical red barn, with milking sheds attached to it. Fenced in, corn fed hogs graced one side of Mike's spread out farmstead. Scads of Holstein cows enjoyed chewing on 150 acres of juicy, ankle high winter wheat. Acres of experimental field peas were waiting to be hauled to a special thrashing place. In between all this scenery, was lots of red chaff Gold Coin wheat. It gave the Maurer farm the right summertime touch of color it needed to remind the passer by that he was in Washington, not Iowa.

Mike had several farm systems figured out that were years in advance. One of his successful operations was August seeded winter wheat, and a Holstein cow combination. The cows feasted on the excessive plant growth. Their full stomachs supplied droppings that were spread evenly by the contented cows, producing natural fertilizer. When the wheat plants received enough punishment from all that chewing, the cows were kicked

out of the growing wheat, and put on a diet of sweet corn silage. Crops harvested from Maurer's double duty fields, produced more for the warehouse than his other 'seed it and reap it' fields.

How did this guy get started in life? First he left the bosom of his family when he found aunt Emma and married her. This made it possible for Sidney, Orlin, Hiram, Trilby, Quenton and Ward to be born. When his family started to grow, Mike started up a cheese factory. But Washington was not Wisconsin. So he went in for straight wheat farming 'til he dove into his show place type of agronomy farming.

When the Maurer offspring reached the inquisitive teenage stage, a tennis court was built, and a place to play ball was laid out. For many years it became the headquarters on Sundays for all the youth to meet. While they were having fun, the parents also came to laugh and talk with other parents.

The Maurer mother and daughter team would on Saturday nights, prepare food for the Sunday onslaught that would show up soon after the preacher closed his pulpit Bible. The tennis court, and the lawn were overloaded with 'take it for granted' neighbors. In the evening songs came from around the piano and other music making things.

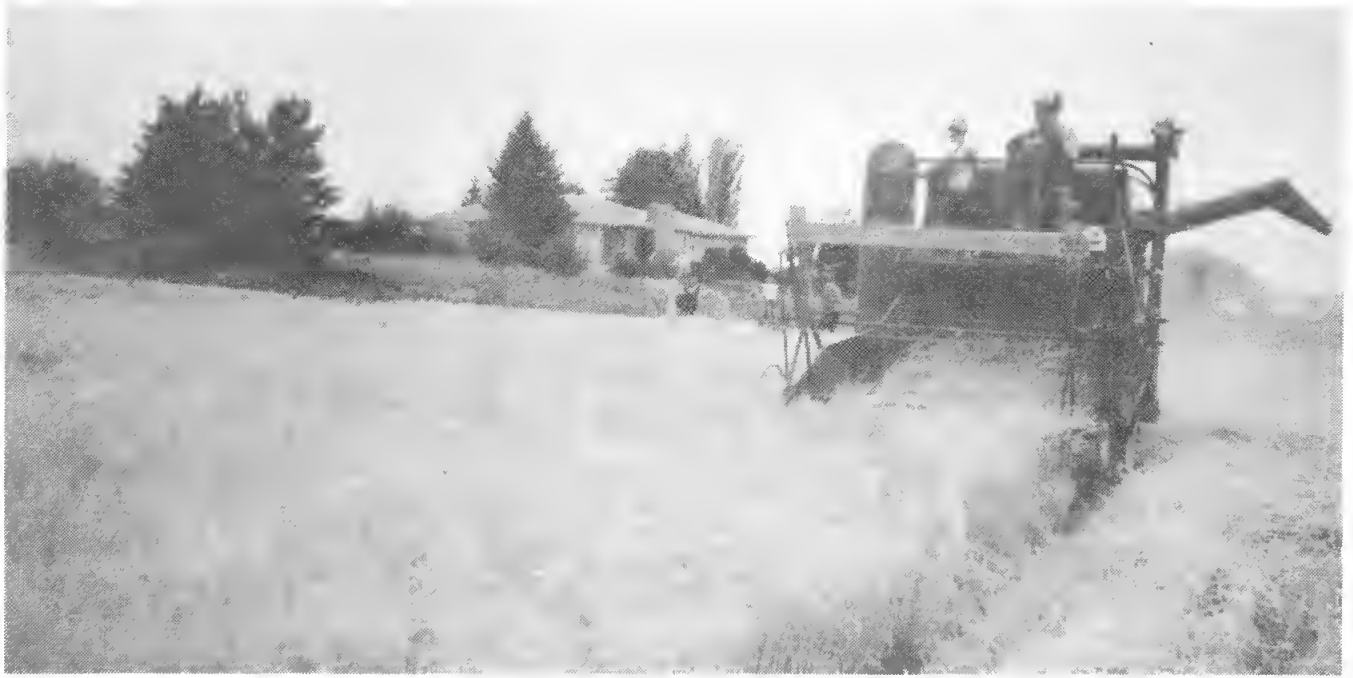
The Maurers were located within a circle of settlers. These settlers like most settlers were fertile, and had lots of kids. Mike knew this, so he donated land, and time, for a schoolhouse to be built, along with a woodshed for storing stove fuel. Also a barn for those kids that would rather ride a horse to school than walk. Those Rocklyn settlers also brought with them their religion, and they needed a place to put it down, so they could use it on Sundays. Again Mike donated a pretty good chunk of farm land, so a church with an empty bell housing could be built. An ever ready hitching post instead of a barn was added. Unless the preacher got too long winded, the tied up buggy horses never got too hungry between meals.

Yea, Mike Maurer was quite a guy in many ways. He and Ed Kruger built the first grain elevator at Rocklyn in 1914. Mike probably was the first amateur photographer in Lincoln County. He bought his first camera in 1898, and did his own developing. Many a historical picture came from his home studio.

During the hay-day of Maurer's prosperity, five acres of park surrounded the entrance of their farm. A vine covered gazebo was in the middle of it all, and was used for those that wished to tarry for a spell. Mike was the happiest when he could make a lot of pretty unessential things grow.

Believing in higher education for their kids, Mike and Emma moved to Pullman, and bought a place that held some college boarding students, as well as their own for schooling purposes. Mike then began his active retirement by becoming the college campus caretaker.

Old Maurer's long and progressive life could have ended on a more rewarding side, but it didn't. After losing Emma to cancer, a couple of tries to find a successful retirement mate failed by a tragic auto death, and by other causes. It seems like many a pioneer farmer that broke trails in advanced farming methods, left a heritage that was later forgotten.



Mini Form - Mini Combine - Stormo's retirement farm, Inc.

Mini Farms Are Necessary

When a farmer is heavy with age, having the 'hots' for a large farm gradually leaves him. With the kids raised, and out of the way, (maybe) we should be able to do what we want. For the retiree, every day is a Sunday but we can work if we care to. Thanks to the pleasure of retirement.

If you can't retire from farming without suffering severe withdrawal pains, you need a fix. The only drugless fix I know of is to fix yourself up with a mini farm, let's say about eight acres. Be sure it's located between a couple of wheat fields, so you will have the right scenery to survive retirement.

What's neat about mini farming, retirement style, is that you can have your cake and eat it too. There is no overworking of yourself, like during the slave days of necessity.

To keep that correct farm feeling goosing through your veins during the slowdown, you will need two mini combines and a tractor. (not that big old thing) Then saw off part of your cultivators, plows, etc. to fit your fun size farm. Keep your old straw baler, but shorten the hitch up a bit. Be sure and grow some certified seed. The extra responsibility will perk up your sagging retired eyes.

Sound silly? The heck it does! That's exactly what the Howard Stormos are doing on their eight acres. Their mini farm holds a good size chunk of grain land, a modern ranch house, a machine shed, and a mini Knott's Berry Farm. The Stormo and Son partnership berry farm, helps Howard and Bernice fill their retirement hours between grain harvests.

Stormo's six acres of grain land is about the right size for supplying the best kind of atmosphere to keep any re-

tired farmer hooked on farming under control. To make a big deal out of mini farming, milk it for what it's worth.

Howard wanted their heavy stand of certified barley harvest to last two days instead of a one day affair. So he and Mike didn't start up their two six foot, overhauled combines 'til the heat of the day had passed.

To get into that post harvest feeling, Stormo's acres again came to the rescue. The field had tons of first grade straw that needed baling. It all adds up to a bit of supplement to that Social Security check.

Howard was a former Indian Creek farmer, and machinery parts man, so he has the ability of fixing up a lot of things that need fixing.

Stormos also have time left over to help the Doc Thompson family with the lively 'Washington Lighting Sticks' enterprise, but that's another story. One need not lose work skills, unless that person can live without carrying on their past environment.

What's interesting is that Stormos found room on their teeny dryland farm to start up the locally known raspberry farm. As a young fellow working on a berry ranch, I got hooked on berries of every kind. After a long winter of drought with no fresh berries, I'm in need of a good berry fix. Bernice comes to the rescue by calling us up to let me know the raspberries are ripe. Stormo's berries carry me safely over the hump 'til fresh peaches are tasty enough to eat.

What intrigues me is, when berry picking time arrives, the Stormos put up about the same size sign, advertising berries that Walt Knott used to hang up on his old berry shed.

The Happy Haymaker

I inherited a father-in-law who is 91 years old. Not really a big deal, except he is not staggering around in some nursing home. So far nature has graced this old guy by letting his aging process meander along at a slow speed. He works every day except in winter when there is a blizzard, then he just feeds his cows.

Great grandfather, Ed Deppner, has never had a physical examination in his whole life, except in 1918 when World War One army guys wanted to know if Ed was physically fit enough to be shot at. However, he did lose a mouthful of teeth, but is going very well on what stray teeth he has left.

Mr. Deppner has made his living the hard way, by earning small profits from a scab rock stock ranch. His implements were simple, and his laboring hours required lots of back breaking work. He lives a humble life, and is an honest man. His conscience won't allow him the privilege to become even just a little bit greedy. Ed never showers himself with luxuries, but gift checks flow easily from his hands to relatives when it comes Christmas and birthday times.

Since his wife is laying up in the Rocklyn cemetery, Sugar and Edwina Mielke spread out a weekly dinner in his bachelor type kitchen. The rest of the time Ed eats only what his slim body needs.

Years ago, this poor immigrant from Poland took in Sugar and married her mother, then successfully raised three more kids. Ed has been putting up hay years before he plunged into matrimony and is still at it to this day. His hay patches now consist of Rocklyn proper and along the railroad tracks that extend out to his old ranch.

Truly, Ed Deppner is a tough old bird. It's the physical activities that keep this 91 year old guy going. He knows it, and that's why he keeps right on mowing hay, and stuffing it down his cows in measured doses.

The haying season weather this year was a scorcher for Ed. Under his tight work clothes beats an old seasoned heart that is busy pushing blood around in search of some cool body spots. A sip from a plastic jug of water that sets on the hot gear box of Ed's haying tractor seems to take care of his evaporation needs.

Years of usage has hardened great grandfather's bones to where he can take the jolts that his tractor dishes out when it bounces over the badger holes, and other bone crunching obstacles. Usually old Ed uses a third of his daily stored up energy trying to start his hand cranked vintage tractor. If his day is a lucky one, he and his tractor can make lots of grass, and alfalfa hay. When mechanical failure takes over, Ed usually sings one of his favorite tunes. Lately he has become quite hoarse. In spite of all the hot weather, and a balky tractor, Ed's hay patches finally got mowed down. But that brings up another problem that great grandfather has to face. His hay truck is also a vintage variety. The two front fenders on the truck have been caved in from years of working on the motor. Ed did manage to nurse the truck with its first load of hay to within 18 feet of the small stack that he had started with the aid of a wheelbarrow and a pitchfork.

I have just made a number of trips over to my father-in-law's place, and I still can't find out why he can't get the truck any closer to the stack than 18 feet. It's embarrassing! I thought I knew how to make any motor



A 1917 photo of Rocklyn's old railroad section house, where great-grandpo Ed Deppner now resides all by himself.



The happy haymaker working on his tractor.

come to life. Finally, George Mielke came to the rescue with a spare truck.

However, Ed is a pleasant guy to work with when you have plenty of time. Having a sharp mind, he tells in detail, past events and all the troubles he experienced throughout his long life as a haymaker. Ed doesn't bark out a lot of naughty words when things go wrong. His habit to sing little ditties, wards off any man-made stress.

Father-in-law stays happy throughout the week. He is a very sincere man, but when Sunday comes, he worries too much about religion. You have to be a pretty sharp preacher to outsmart him on answers to his questions that are impossible to answer. But if you are a deep down fundamentalist, I guess you have that right when you live in a world of the Supernatural.

Still Ed loves best of all his simple life on earth, until his dying day will take him away. Even with his doctrinal thinking, the safety of the great beyond is just his last resort.

The Hazards of Rocklyn's First Tractor

In the fall of 1927, an inexperienced teenager saw pictures in a farm magazine where power from tractor wheels were being used for pulling purposes. An obsession hit him. He wanted a tractor in front of his plows, and other things, instead of horses. There was no way to be happy without a tractor. He talked his dad into mortgaging the farm.

The half-size farm did have enough value to guarantee a 15-30 tractor. It was the biggest one International Harvester Company made at that time. It took weeks before it arrived on a flatcar.

One special day, there it was! A shiny new tractor setting next to the Davenport depot. While dad was busy putting all the wheel lugs into the back of our old Essex, I was pouring water into the empty radiator. It took a lot of cranking before we found out there was no gas in the tank.

The tractor was steered down the road to where it was going to spend the rest of its life. Before reaching home, Jack Telford flagged me down. He wanted to know if I really intended to farm with that rig, and what was I going to use for traction when the ground got soggy.

The next day, horseman Bandy stopped in to let me know that this tractor could be of some usage back in the corn country. Butterfly feeling hit my stomach, as lugs and rims were being installed to the tractor wheels.

The first job the tractor had to do, was to pull some plows. It was quite a sweaty job steering around all those fence posts, as the field was being opened up. Clumps of neighbors began to show up, and were waiting by the starting corner of the field. They were wanting to see how the stubble was getting plowed without the aid of live horse-power.

After clutching the tractor out of gear, it was like parking in a group of critics. A ray of encouragement

came over me when Herman Maurer said he wouldn't mind having a tractor like mine if he had all level land.

The rest didn't think that way. "It will pack the soil too much", they said. Also it burns gasoline. Hay is cheaper. "If I run out of hay, I can get my fields plowed on stubble pasture". Fred Koch asked, "Why do you want to take on more farm expenses?" He stated he had to tear down his combine motor every season, after averaging only three weeks of running. The rings and bearings were shot by then.

In those days, good air cleaners were not invented yet. Homemade ones usually had to do. The Fred Koch Special, was a gunny sack placed over the intake pipe. It did keep out straw and other flying objects, allowing only clean dust to enter the motor.

Before the year was out, lo and behold! My tractor started making smoke instead of power. All that unfiltered dust had ground the rings down to a thin image of themselves. Even the lowest gear was too painful for the dusted out motor. The tractor did manage to limp back to the barn, where it was parked in the back stall for an over-haul job.

The partly finished field caused Quentin Maurer to ask why I took a vacation from farming. I don't remember how I answered that question. It must have been a vague one. After all, it was sort of a classified secret to save the reputation of future tractors. Later, an air intake pipe was installed, reaching eight feet above tractor height. A decent air filter was then bolted on.

Anyway, the seeds for future tractors finally got planted out here at Rocklyn. The next year Charley Fox got antsy and swapped his string of nags for a Holt 30 tractor. Soon to follow was the Grob brothers. For a spell, the great depression checked the flow of tractors taking over the farms. Finally when Roosevelt pulled the right economic levers, sounds of tractors could be heard in about every field.

Oh, My Aching Back

A lot of us natives were born during the phasing out period of the stationary thrashing outfits. That style of thrashing left a lot to be desired. However, all the sacks of wheat were sowed up on the spot, and piled in rows to be hauled to market at a later date.

But when the combines took over, it scattered the wheat sacks all over the field. It was caused by the sack sower not having a place to store the filled sacks. When it got a little crowded on the sowing platform, the sack sower would trip a playground type of slide, releasing the few sacks that would come crashing through the stubble, to land right smack on the ground.

Of all the foolish things to do! Why even in those days, a team and a bulk wagon, or an old time truck could have picked up a good size dump of bulk wheat right from the combine. But since they didn't do such smart things then, all those scattered 130 and 140 pound sacks had to be picked up from ground level by human back power.

True, we now have huge piles of wheat on the ground, but do have scientific ways of picking the wheat up. That is, whenever anyone wants the surplus stuff.

In the days of not knowing better, I spent a season during harvest picking up wheat sacks. Every pound of wheat that was raised on my farm, and Orlin Maurer's had to be lifted onto an old high bed truck. Many of the sacks weighed more than I did. Sure, a lot of big guys performed this feat without hollering.

The results? As an old guy now, I realize I'm paying for my youthful folly by lifting scads of wheat sacks. In my case it didn't promote a strong back. I now have to depend on running, swimming, and special exercises to help keep my back from making a cripple out of me. I've learned to do a lot of grunting, and very little lifting when asked to help carry something heavy.

There is evidence that lifting wheat sacks can either make or break a person. Example: Years ago, 'Wolf' Boyk, and his future brother-in-law, Ralph Brown, were taking in wheat at the Rocklyn warehouse. Both were models of physical fitness. Between loads they would practice basketball shots in the hollow end of the warehouse. During midday I complained to the two athletic minded guys that lifting wheat sacks could in time wreck us. Wolf insisted it was making him stronger. He wanted to bet he could lift a 130 pound sack over his head. It was worth a small wager, so I got my movie camera from the truck to register the momentous event. The feat was

achieved, but Wolf Boyk developed an instant hernia that eventually sent him to the hospital.

Of course, there are exceptions for those that successfully handled wheat sacks throughout their weight lifting years. Old Ed Deppner, Rocklyn's well known hay-maker, is the only person I know personally who spent a very large part of his life lifting wheat sacks. Even though it took its toll, he still has a very workable back.

Mr. Deppner started piling sacks of wheat in 1915, when Mike Maurer, Ed Boyk, and Herman Bursch built a warehouse at the Rocklyn station. Deppner's part time summer job outlasted five wheat buying managers. Throughout those years of devoted work, Deppner has lifted thousands upon thousands of sacks of wheat. His energy helped build many wheat piles, both inside, and outside the warehouse. Especially in 1923 when the outside stack of sacked wheat outstretched the warehouse by twice its length, and four times as tall as Ed Deppner.

How come this 91 year old guy survived those years of lifting wheat sacks? I don't know. However, he now complains that his neck hurts when he turns it. It could be from looking behind to see what his dump rake is doing when he is raking hay. Keeping his head forward when feeding his cows this winter should remedy that.

In the days of the sacked wheat era there were many like Ed, piling sacks to the rafters in warehouses, then loading them back into boxcars, with a cart that held five sacks at a time. The Rocklyn Farmers Warehouse was just a good example of many such long shed like buildings that dotted the railroad side tracks.

Brains began replacing backs when the bulk wheat method became popular. Then the supermarket kind of elevators took over. Now if you happen to be a weakling, you can still get a job at the elevator, or as a wheat hauler. All you need is a good thumb to push a button with, or fingers strong enough to grip small hydraulic levers.

A few years before the ending of the sacked wheat days at Rocklyn, another company took over the defunct warehouse. Later bargain notices were sent out to those that were interested in the remnants of this landmark.

The Hardy brothers salvaged the rather modern 'weigh the whole works' outdoor scales. Like scavengers, the rest of us picked out what we would benefit from, and a good bonfire took care of cremating the remains. Even the ashes seemed to have disappeared by the time the new elevator started placing wheat in its cement multi storage bins.

Elections

It's neat to have political elections every once in a while. It stimulates the mind when local candidates come up to talk to you. Half of them make you feel funny when you know deep inside that you are not going to vote for them.

One time Sugar fell for a nice guy that was running for a local job. At about the same time, I met and liked his

opponent. It doesn't make sense going our separate ways voting for these two, as we would be canceling each other out. What to do? I had 'til that Tuesday to decide whether Sugar's reasons come first, or party loyalty.

It was too bad that this Creston steam plant issue caused so much emotional steam. Inflammable debates ran rampant. I'm a nut about good environment. But you

have to have proven evidence that fumes from tall chimneys will hurt precious plants, and other living things.

In 1916 there were no steam plant projects to get excited over. Still things got pretty warm one fall afternoon at the Rocklyn General Store, when a political battle broke out.

In those days, Republican presidents were treating everyone pretty good. If it weren't for Henry Kuch, the Democrats would have become extinct out here at Rocklyn.

Teddy Roosevelt had made people happy with his manic free swinging style of running the country. Big fat Taft was a harmless and likeable president. The only reason Democrat Wilson made the grade in 1912 was that the Republican party became split. Teddy ran on the Bull Moose ticket. That caused Taft to get too few votes. Wilson was then able to enter the White House.

Four years later, Wilson had a scare when he ran against Charles Hughes. Election night Charles went to bed thinking he was President. But the next day, California sneaked Wilson back into the oval room.

Now let's go back to that neighborhood General Store on the Saturday before the Wilson-Hughes election. No physical violence occurred, but words flew thick and fast. George Sweezy appeared to be the only level headed farmer there. He tried to be the balance wheel of reason. My dad's only defense for switching parties was that Wilson promised to keep us out of the war that was brewing in Europe. Mike Maurer who knew a lot about politics, tried to out shout everyone. Henry Kuch, the only registered Democrat there that afternoon, took a verbal beating.

Most Rocklyn citizens left one at a time, after shouting their final view points. None stood long enough by the door to wait for replies.

That night, several political signs were torn off telephone poles. The following Sunday at church, the flock was wondering who in their midst was the one that tore 'Vote for Wilson' signs down. The guilty one must never have figured it was a sin big enough to cause trouble from above.

It's been half a century since Roosevelt beat the socks off of Alfred Landon. By the way, did you know that old Alfred is still alive?

During the Landon-Roosevelt election time, a lot of small town excitement happened to me. Getting ready to vote for the second time for Roosevelt was a big deal. From the primaries on, each Wednesday night after taking in a talkie movie at the old Talkington Theatre in Da-

venport, a group of us political critics would meet at Doc's Service Station. The 'meeting of the minds' room was located between the toilets, and a row of hand cranked oil pumps.

Those spit and argue meetings usually consisted of Wilmer Boyk, 'Doc' Rude, 'Dutch' Van Hook, and old Ken Smith. They represented the firm believers in the Landon's remedies for curing the depression. The liberals were some new comers to Davenport, who were shocked at the town's conservatism.

It was there that I fell prey to my first, and only gambling venture. The evil of betting raised its ugly head when our Republican friends were misled by an unreliable literary magazine pool, that was predicting a Landon victory. Going back not so far to the more exciting political days of the past. The Truman-Dewey contest, and the Eisenhower-Stevenson race to the White House were the last election night parties were held around Rocklyn. Just before the Truman-Dewey election night in 1948, we had just finished undertaking the first extension on our house. It was named the 'front room,' in memory of a room that was missing since the house was built.

So a semi-open house, and election return party was in order. The placing of three radios had to be put in strategic places. Sugar scattered junk food throughout the house for nervous neighbors to chew on. Soon the house was full of Republicans, Democrats, Fundamentalists, and those that didn't give a darn.

For excitement, the Truman-Dewey contest for the White House was one show that was hard to beat. Most of our crowd that night loved Truman. He was a man of strong convictions. After doing what he figured should be done, he let the political chips fall where they chose. He not only countered a nationwide Republican swing, but had to overcome split-ups in his own party.

Old Senator Thurmond didn't like Truman advocating civil rights for blacks, so he jumped the fence, and dragged with him over a million and a half southern voters to the States Rights party. Also Wallace did the same thing when he ran off with the same number of voters to form the Progressive party. All because he couldn't see eye-to-eye with Truman's anti-Soviet stand.

All those happenings caused Truman to jump on a back end of a train, and take his problems to the people. By so doing, he upset all those who had forecast his certain defeat.

Truman? What a guy! No wonder Reagan and Mondale used him as an example of a great American during their political campaigns.

Field Days At Lind

Attending the Dry Land Field Day at Lind on June 13, 1985, brought back memories of other guided tours at this Research Station. It was 50 years ago when I first visited this spot for educational purposes. I remember that year well. I felt quite mature because I became uncle for the first time. It got me to thinking that I was getting past my prime, and certainly old enough to get married. I had no intention of staying celibate for life.

Since nothing that June turned my head romantically, a maiden trip to this Research Station was in order, as it kept my mind on farming. There were 50 to 60 farmers that arrived from every direction. It was called visitors day then. We toured all over this experimental farm. They showed us improved farm methods, and new varieties of grains that would shell out more wheat.

At noon it was sort of a homey affair. I believe it was

some Grange ladies that served us a semi-dinner from a wood burning cook stove. The doughnuts could have been imported from Lind.

Most of the afternoon was spent in discussion. In those days plant ailments were scarce. Heavy stands of wheat had not arrived yet to bring in a host of diseases. The year of 1935 was one of the driest in the history of the station. It zonked out the spring wheat, but the winter wheat plots that were seeded early yielded above normal, which was at that time a surprise to the average late seeders.

Fertilizer then was only known as a waste product from a lot of horses and cows. Once a year the manure was hauled out, and scattered so the barn could once again be seen, and put back into more efficient use. An old bulletin printed in the early 1920s stated that there never would be a need for adding nitrogen in the dry land farming belt of eastern Washington. If that prophecy would have been right, there probably would have been no surplus wheat, or no fertilizer dealers, and maybe no farmers.

It's interesting to note that back when the station got into gear, they experimented with press wheels on drills. Example: four year averages without press wheels, the wheat yielded 8.6 bushels. With press wheels, 9.1 bushels, an increase of half a bushel an acre! A big deal in those days of low spring wheat yields. It did lead to the beginning of advanced seeding methods.

This experimental station has the lowest rainfall of any research station devoted to dry land research in the United States. For years a lot of us local farmers figured if a new breed of wheat was able to survive at Lind, it should spring forth with surprising yields where rainfall had a tendency of falling in heavier doses.

Seems like you don't have to be in physical shape to get a job at this Dry Land Station. They got a sign up in the office stating: "This department requires no physical fitness program. Everyone gets enough exercise by jumping to conclusions, flying off the handle, carrying things too far, dodging responsibilities, and pushing their luck."

Dick Hoffman from Rocklyn is the farm manager for this station. He is in excellent physical condition regardless of their no health program. Research Technologist, Dick Nagamitsu is still one of the main cogs in the wheel of things at this place. A large subsoiler, and a heavy duty fertilizer rig, both Wilbur, Wash., products, were lined up by a huge eight tired tractor. A far cry from the farm equipment I saw there 50 years ago when a tractor of proper size was on display. That early day tractor could be sheltered nicely from the sun by the shadow of today's four wheel monster.

The new Sheaf Building easily held the 350 tour guests that were there. The loading docks went straight out from the hall, serving as a walk-in to the truck beds, where we were hauled away like cattle to the field plots. All the varieties grown in those plots have a history of how they will respond to certain growing conditions. The trick is to figure out which new variety will make you happy by supplying the most bushels for you.

The next stop was something new. A Russian thistle plot with rows of wheat in between. Some farmers down there must grow a combination of wheat and thistles. This

plot gave them the idea of whether to spray or not to spray for the Russians. There is a chemical for cheat grass control in wheat. The name is too long to spell. It's tricky to use successfully. The field tour speaker said he gets very emotional when the chemical wipes out the cheat.

To till or not to till was not much of an issue for the farmers in that locality. The crop was devastating on the no-till wheat. What puny wheat and weeds that were left wouldn't supply food very long for the field mice that have moved in on this patch of unmolested soil.

There were 20 plots of barley and spring wheat this year that are trying to finish out their growth under tough dry conditions. None has given up the ghost as of June 13. Information was dished out on how to handle paradise crops.

In recent years, a wheat queen has been added to the noon program. It was a privilege to visit with retired plant breeder, Orville Vogel. Someone mentioned that when times are not so hot, crowds as large as this one usually turn out.

Alan Pettibone, Washington State Director of Agriculture was the guest speaker. The 12,000,000 bushels of wheat that are laying on the ground in the State isn't such a hot idea, according to Pettibone. He sounded logical when he referred to getting the strength of the dollar in line with world wide trade. He's disgusted with anyone using embargos for political purposes. Ten years from now, things could be turned around, but that's a heck of a long time to wait.

What's the advice from the Lind district that year? Well, keep your nose to the grindstone, and hope to gosh that the world will start needing more wheat before you go broke.

At the Dry Land Research Station this year, 1986, it was educational going around and getting into group discussions. One thing everyone agreed on is that it takes a lot of money to farm now days. You got to go out and make more money than you spend, or spend less money than you make. Another thought that got tossed around was that a sound economy cannot be based on anything it cannot control.

This year, no farm can safely be considered a home for the financially shaky farmer. Tillers of the soil have strong emotional ties to their work and place, ties that can only be broken at a high psychological cost. During the depression days of 55 years ago, the thought of being kicked off the farm gave me the jitters.

Most farmers attending the Dry Land Station this year didn't look too bad for the wear and tear they are going through. But you can spot the ones about to go broke by the way they look and act.

I spotted a depressed farmer on the second test plot we stopped at. He was looking at the varieties of wheat with empty eyes. When I asked him a question, he just grunted. When the question was repeated, concentration returned after he reached down to snap off a wheat head. Instead of answering my question he said, "What difference does it make, better varieties just add to the surplus." He smiled temporarily, knowing his answer was just an expression of feeling helpless.

There certainly is more than one rookie farmer

caught with his pants down. After the morning tour, I got to visiting with a retired farmer that I usually see at Lind. He told me he turned his lease over to his son-in-law several years ago. Son-in-law was able to get quick loans at the drop of a hat. He hadn't learned to creep before he walked. Instead he started out in overdrive so he could catch up with the established farmers. Now since wheat prices have gone to pot and last year's crop wasn't so hot, son-in-law is starting to hint for father-in-law to come to the rescue. But here is father-in-law's problem; if he tries to save son-in-law's farm set-up, it would endanger his hard earned savings.

Finally it was time to go inside the large metal building for the noon program. Once again this year proved to be a day worth spending at the Experiment Station. Jim Walesby from Almira, president of the Wheat Association had loads of interesting things to say. Another speaker was asked to say something positive. His answer was, "I'm glad to be here. Have you any questions?" Michelle Nelson, Washington Wheat Queen is a cutie. A farmer told her, "I face the end of my rope, but I'll tie a knot and will try to hold on a little longer."

Sam Smith, President of Washington State University, looked very much like a farmer with a Wheat Growers cap setting on top of his head. Sam bragged on the research they are doing and stated we have to move our produce. "Japan works on its production problems, while we like to guess, and go for broke." So says President Smith. While he was at it, he also added to his speech, "Farmers have to face things in a business way...We need the best of students from college to carry on the future load."

The field tour continued into the afternoon. What plots looked too good to be real? Well, it was where part

of Lind's ancient volcanic soil got soaked with lots of deep well water, and a large dose of nitrogen. Except for the expense of irrigation, and the trouble of getting all that extra wheat to market, there is very little for the irrigator to worry about, like roots running out of moisture and shriveled kernels.

The dry land farmer doesn't have it so lucky. He has to look up to the sky for his moisture and a guy can get a stiff neck from doing that. This year is no exception. Usually in the fall it's so dry down in Lind, moisture can only be found way down there below the deep mulch. Although not the best yielder, Moro wheat is about the only variety that can successfully find its way to the surface without getting lost. A lot of fields around the station are seeded to Moro for that simple reason.

The volunteer cheat grass is doing exceptionally well this year. It still has the habit of taking over wheat fields. But the picture is different in the Palouse country. We have been doing some running in that area and got to look things over. If the weather behaves itself in the Palouse, there will be some mighty good crops harvested in those crop covered, treeless mountains.

Familiar faces popped up here and there at Lind that day. Well known Agronomist, Kenny Morrison looks real good, after losing a small part of his body through surgery so the rest of him could live. Retired wheat breeder, Orville Vogel looked OK too. Orville is still at it, matching one dollar for every \$20 donated by growers to replace dwindling Federal money for wheat research.

Let's dream that by next year all those stacks of wheat have been shipped out. And that every farmer that was going broke, didn't quite make it to the end of the rope. After all, if you are molded to be a farmer, it's hard to change horses in the midstream of life.

The Flying Model T

While visiting with the Mielke brothers, and Richard Hardy at the Harrington Barbeque, we got to talking about the Russians shooting down that big plane with a lot of passengers inside. Finally the conversation drifted to the early day passenger planes. George told about the first sample ride he took in an enclosed aircraft. It was in a tri-motored Ford plane that came to Harrington to make a few bucks. The paying natives received the thrill of finding out what it was like to be lifted off the ground.

This Ford airplane was the Model T of the airways 50 some years ago. It was made out of corrugated sheets of tin, cut to the right size to make a plane that would hold 16 passengers. A motor was hung on each wing. The third motor was placed right in front of the pilot. This type of plane was nicknamed the "Tin Goose." Carl Mielke said, "Everytime the plane returned to take up more sight-seers, the pilot had to put some oil into each of the motor's reservoirs."

A few years before this aviation scoop at Harrington took place, this same Tin Goose took up thrill seekers from a stubble field near Davenport. The price for the Davenport plane ride was discriminating. The pilot and his helper drug out a scale, and charged one cent a pound for each live weight passenger. A skinny person could get

on the plane for about a buck, while a fat man had to pay up to three dollars for the same belly tickling ride.

In the years of 1930 and 31, an air passenger route was laid out. Those old planes flew low over Davenport, Rocklyn, south of Wilbur, Coulee City, etc. as they winged their way to Seattle. A landing stop was in order just before the plane flung itself over the Cascades.

During the Hoover administration there were no appropriations handed out for emergency landing fields, so expenses were kept down to bare bones. Emergency landing strips were mapped out about every 40 miles. A guy with a car would stop in at a farmer's place and ask if he could use a certain stubble field for such landings. When permission was granted, the flying company's representative would angle his car and bounce across the field, stopping to pick up rocks that could be a threat to landing wheels. He then would sight across the field with his naked eyes, and place red flags on each end of the instant made emergency runway.

By the Rocklyn corner, Fred Magin's stubble field was laid out in such a fashion. These landing fields were on the portable side. Farmers' summer fallow system caused that.



Except for being in an overhauled condition, this early day air line used the same make of planes the barnstormers used, the tri-motor Ford. Even though times were tough in those days, the Tin Goose usually was loaded to the brim with 16 passengers. No cocktails were served, so everybody had to wait nervously 'til their destination was reached. Lunch was served from what you put in your overcoat pocket before you left home.

Those corrugated sheets of thin metal made the "Tin Goose" a noisy bugger to ride in. However, for sitting purposes, the plane had comfortable wicker chairs, and a washroom that must have held a porta-potty.

The three flying Fords that made their home in Spokane had rough and short lives. If a plaque had been erected for the threesome, the arrival date would have shown 1928 and the all gone date 1933. The first Tin Goose only survived two weeks. Nov. 1928 it flew down to Colfax to help dedicate the new airport. Like the flying Goose that visited Harrington, it also took up paid passengers that day.

The next morning the Tin Goose headed back to Spokane, where it found a lot of thick fog down close to the earth. The guy that was flying this rig, got tired of waiting for the fog to go away, so he decided to plow through it. But he plowed the plane too deep, causing the Tin Goose to crumble and roll up into a pile. Two passengers lived by bouncing clear of the wreckage and were able to tell how the pilot took a chance and learned it was the wrong thing to do.

Nick Mamer, the daddy of Spokane aviation, pioneered the air route between Spokane and Seattle with the two remaining Tin Geese. He named them the "West Wind I" and the "West Wind II."

Mamer's brain storm got started at the wrong time.

In 1929 the stock market crash didn't help him and his backers one bit. The depression that followed was of no help either.

When the Northwest Airways moved in from St. Paul with a fat mail contract tucked under its arm, it put an end to Nick Mamer's pioneer Model T air route. Nick then sold his two flying Fords, and got a job with Northwest Airways. Years later, the invaders became known as the Northwest Airlines.

During the height of Mamer's flying glory, one of his Tin Gooses would fly over our house every morning at about 8:25. If dad and I hadn't been boxing fans at that time, I never would have had a picture of the flying Goose passing over our ranch.

My dad's only sport interest was keeping track of all the heavyweight boxing champions that dated back to John L. Sullivan days, and up through Jack Dempsey's fighting years. The mighty Dempsey retired after his last Tunney fight in 1928. In June 1931, Jack came to Spokane to referee a fight at the Natatorium Park.

It was a must that dad and I go see Jack Dempsey in person, so we could look him over while he refereed. Don Frazer and another pugilist were pounding heck out of each other. That night I found out that boxing was a brutal and dangerous sport. But my dad had enough cave man in him to enjoy it.

At the ringside, Dempsey's side-kick announced that he and Jack were taking the West Wind plane in the morning, to Seattle for more refereeing dates.

The next morning found me waiting on the cellar hump with my Brownie camera. No, Jack Dempsey didn't wave at me as the plane passed over our house. But he was sitting up there on a wicker chair, listening to the rattling sounds of the old Tin Goose.

A Bit Of Porcupine History

At a boat show in Spokane, it was interesting listening in on a salesman trying to stuff a rocket type boat down a potential customer's neck. This salesman was telling the guy he would have twice as much fun if he had a speedier boat. He was advised to trade in his old boat for one that would go zoom all over the lake. Good gosh! This middle aged guy may enjoy just seeing the lake go by in slow motion.

Since we all have to wait a bit before jumping into the water or to watch happy skiers being pulled around on our own man made lake, how about going over a little history that made all this summer fun possible? In case some of you young ones don't know it, there are two rivers buried under Lake Roosevelt. These two bodies of flowing water didn't have much to do for eons, except to carry run off water to the ocean. Then smart guys came along and made all that moving water do great things. One of the good side effects for our territory was the makings of Porcupine Bay, Fort Spokane, Keller Ferry and that semi-desert show place, Spring Canyon. Also a lot of mini beaches that sort of sprung up on their own.

The creation began a little over a half century ago. At that time, the government got a hold of a lot of help, and raised the Spokane and the Columbia Rivers as if by magic. The water rose to just the right height to form those wonderful inland beaches. Now let's take Porcupine Bay to elaborate on, as its development was unique.

Verbal records show that early day boaters with their one to three horse power motors came upon this spot. They figured it was a darn nice place to park their boats, and to stretch out on its sandy beach, after devouring a basket lunch. How did the early explorers know this paradise was Porcupine Bay? They didn't 'til they saw some porcupines waddling around.

Early landowners that joined this vast lake along Porcupine Bay were only interested in taking a look from the bluffs, and saying, "That's a lot of water down there." Then they headed back to their farming or cattle producing businesses.

But, there was one farmer out Harrington way, that took more than one look. He was Herb Armstrong, a guy that didn't mind spending his own money to develop this place. He fixed up the old trail-like road along the water line, so the landlocked swimmers, and picnickers could enjoy this spot. Also Herb and his friends built some wooden boat docks, and stuck a pipe deep enough into the ground to bring forth some sandy water. For a little privacy, a couple of out-houses were erected.

A few of us early day users asked this question: "Will Porcupine Bay ever grow into a nationally known Federal Park, or will it remain a secluded spot for the chosen few?"

Again Herb expanded his energy and came to the rescue. He started pestering the Parks Dept. to visit Porcupine. The idea was to sell them on developing this spot. They were reluctant to have it checked out as they just got through finishing Fort Spokane Recreational Area, and figured this addition wouldn't be supported by the vacationing public.

But Herb kept the pressure on. When it looked like he was going to get thrown out on his ear, the park guys finally promised to phone the big wheels at headquarters. A Sunday date was then set aside for their inspection.

Herb immediately sent out emergency notices to all of us that used the shores of Porcupine. He told us to get down there early Sunday and help fill the beach with lots of people. Boaters also responded. They were buzzing their boats up to the shoreline long before the big wheels arrived. A couple of clunked out boats were towed over to fill in a bare spot.

All afternoon there was a waiting line in front of the out-houses. Unnecessary repeaters were to show the park guys how urgent it was to have new porcelain indoor toilets to sit on.

Even if it wasn't ethical, the stunt was a success. The Park Board appropriated all the money needed to match the rest of the chain of Recreational Parks. It was neat to have been blessed with the security of Park Supervisors and well-trained life guards. The Park take-over encouraged Herb Armstrong to build the now present day road right into Porcupine's parking lot.

In the beginning, Porcupine differed from the other Federally regulated parks in that you could set up 'squatters rights', and stay 'til the snow flew if you so desired which many seasonal campers did. Nature so arranged Porcupine that swimming, boating and camping are all done in one spot. It was interesting to see how the habitual ones came as soon as school was out and took choice spots by the water's edge, then stayed all summer, rent free.

Usually Porcupine Bay kids raised there during the choice growing season were a healthy, happy bunch that didn't get into trouble, except for digging sand holes for night strollers to stumble into.

Wally Sowers, a Spokane fireman commuted to work so his family could have the whole season to enjoy



Usual scenes at Porcupine.

summer's dog days at the Bay. That fall one of his daughters, Jeannie, didn't want to go back to the impersonal life of city schools. She stayed with us so she could enjoy a year of high school life, country style.

With so many semi-permanent residents taking over Porcupine, it finally got to the point where campers were beginning to slide into the lake. There were just too many people wanting to enjoy what the Bay had to offer. First come, first serve. A blockade had to be enforced. When rules of limitation and fees were tacked up, sounds of upsetness could be heard around the Bay. However, most of the old summer squatters realized their free days of stays would forever disappear.

During the years our National Recreational Resorts have been a retreat for interesting people. Porcupine was no exception. A quite a few summers ago, a group of Hungarian refugees sort of took over Porcupine on weekends. How could that happen? Well, in a way the Russians were responsible for it. These rebels got tired of having the Russians sitting in their country. So they took pot shots at them. But they were outnumbered, and had to run like heck for their lives. The Catholic Diocese of Spokane took them under their wings so they could survive and find jobs.

When the Hungarians arrived in Spokane, they let homesickness set in, 'til one of their leaders, Egon Bataai found Porcupine Bay. The following weekend, most of them made the maiden trip to this spot. These run-arounds were a tightly knit tribe, and lived all their lives near a beautiful lake, so Porcupine was an excellent substitute. Continually on weekends, these happy Hungarians would load themselves down with arms full of picnic stuff, tents and lots of bathing suits.

The Bataais had two daughters that knocked your eyes out. The rest came in various sizes and shapes. They were all highly skilled in their trades. Egon painted portraits that were more real than real. Through Gonzaga,

arrangements were made for Bing Crosby to set a spell for Bataai so he could paint him with a pipe in his mouth and a fishing hat on his head. When Jack Kennedy got shot, Egon, with the aid of photos, painted a larger than life size picture of our dead president. It was sent back to widow Jaquelyn. She picked Egon's portrait over other entries, and it now is hanging in Kennedy's show off room. Egon also was the fussiest picture taker I ever saw. Down at the Bay, he used special reflectors and always looked in every direction before clicking his camera. The enlargement he made of Sugar and me did look a little shinier.

That summer, and the following year, it wasn't all Hungarian goulash that went on at Porcupine Bay. It was love American style that the Bay contributed when a lonely soldier from Boston asked, "Do you know any good Catholic girls who like horses?" We did know of one, and Sugar saw to it that Peter Caisse met Karen Conrad on the swimming dock. It was all smiles and sunshine. In a couple of days, we knew they were falling in love, because they were pushing each other off the diving dock.

When love became solid enough, the desire to get married set in. A lot of us Porcupine patrons were invited to their wedding and dance. In dedication to their happiness, Peter and Karen built a quaint lake home at Porcupine, which they and their kids occupy whenever possible.

There are all kinds of special people that we Porcupiners get to meet seasonally. Some we knew long ago as singles looking for summertime fun. Now we get to visit with their grandchildren. Some left the water's edge when their kids grew up. Others took up building lake homes. A few dropped out and settled in their own back yards for summer fun. All in all, vacationing groups and get togethers are still very much the summer scene at the Bay.

Editors Old and New

Being an editor or a writer for a newspaper in a country town is a challenging and sometimes a rewarding opportunity. Weekly newspapers have given many a talented person the experience needed for higher goals or to become a local fixture. However, a person can't help but feel compassion for new editors. It's not all gold that glitters when it comes to pleasing everyone, when a stand is taken on controversial issues. But there's that satisfying feeling that comes all over you when you write something that you feel good about. True, weekly news has to be written up whether it's a scoop or not.

Of all the editors I got to know, I think the most unique guy was George (Scoop) Hering. He was Davenport Times editor from the late 1920s and on through a good chunk of the 1940s.

Contrary to the ambitious editors of today, Scoop Hering didn't want to go on to higher picking. When he came down from chilly Alaska, a warmer small town looked good to him, so he stayed around in our county seat for the rest of his life. He was a likeable guy and always carried a smile, but not quite the Will Rogers type.

However, he did have a sense of humor, and had a column called 'Fish Tales' where he made comments, and poked fun at a lot of us folks.

Old Scoop thought I had odd ball habits because I exposed a lot of skin when comfortable weather set in. I was made the target for a lot of his 'nature boy' jokes. For an editor, Scoop's life style was also quite different from the status quo. He never owned or drove a car and depended on his feet and catching rides for news gathering. I doubt whether he would have lasted very long now days without a press car. My brother-in-law hauled Scoop to every important sport event in the state. He lived and ate sports with such force that Davenport's football field is named after him.

Hering was a very fast typist, but I found out lately that he never learned to change the typewriter ribbon. Either the publisher or an alert office girl did that chore for him. Scoop also had it easier than our present day editors. During the depression, the paper felt the squeeze of hard times, so lots of weeks the press only printed four pages.

It must have been on a Sunday when old Scoop Hering passed away years ago. Sugar and I were out walking in our Sunday clothes. Upon approaching his home, we saw the undertaker rolling Scoop out for his last ride down town.

Except for a more open minded society, problems of pleasing the reading public were the same years ago as they are now. For example: Over 50 years ago, Will Rogers played a role in a movie of a middle aged bachelor that was the publisher and editor of a country town weekly newspaper. It was a typical story of early town life that held frozen ideas.

The editor got into trouble when he tried to help a young lady out that fell in love with a banker's son. A misunderstanding was keeping them apart. In the process of helping, the editor stole the thunder of some of the town's righteous. They had already branded this young lady for having had an affair with a no account guy when she was of tender years. They were out to save the banker's son from this tainted girl, and didn't want the editor to encourage a mismatch.

Finally the outspoken ways of the editor caused a blue nose lady to write a letter to his paper, condemning him severely. Realizing his helping interference was going down the drain, he invited himself to the church social picnic.

With a smile on his face, the newspaper editor sized up those staunch ladies, and began bragging how good their pies were. This made them more pliable. They began listening to him as he told how these two sweethearts were made for each other, and needed the community's love and compassion.

In no time, these ladies took this couple on as sort of a home missionary project. All that romantic atmosphere woke up a flame in the old gals that was darn near out. They started living a more exciting life with their husbands. In the process, the editor found himself a wife.

The moral is: It doesn't hurt to mix with your critics. It takes very little communication to restore the life line of understanding.

Old Times Vs Now

It's neat to record those old nostalgic days of the past. An article in the Odessa Record written by Harold Kern, so ably took one back to those inconvenient but amusing days of long ago.

The only satisfaction I got out of living back then, was growing up with the improvements. Before Public Power got started, a small wind charger, and a couple of car batteries was a big deal. If the dust storms didn't stop blowing, lights could then be turned on with just a pull of the string.

The things you didn't have in those days you didn't miss. Certainly no one would want to go back to the 'good old days'. The next generation may say the same thing about our present times.

In those pioneer days, if you had not made your stake before rheumatism set in, it was the County Farm for you. Better known as the 'poor house.' If the poor house was lucky enough to have a back porch filled with chairs that overlooked a cemetery, the unfortunate could sit in comfort, and see their destination.

Now days we can fight for good causes without get-

ting a no-no signal. Blockheads that used to discriminate against blacks, and various minorities, are now being stopped in their tracks. Evolutionists and religionists are now trying to live side by side without saying too many naughty things about each other. Also women (bless them) are being made equal with us guys.

There are no more 'poor house' fears. Social Security checks can just about take up the slack to keep senior citizens independent. If you are old enough or look sort of caved in, you can get discounts at certain eating places and movies. Eligible Medicare patients can swim at the YWCA for half price. It's a good deal because it could stretch out your life a little beyond the sunset.

Under the capitalistic system, some of us are fortunate enough to salt a little away, and live off the interest that some poor devil has to pay to get a start in life. Besides that, a lot of us get bigger Social Security checks than some of those that need it.

Even though there are adjustments that should be made, we still have a lot of goodies that far outweigh the 'good old days'.

A Comment

It's rather amusing, after years of cussing the Democrats out for inventing a farm program, the Republicans have come up with a much more liberal one. History has proven that a farm program is necessary in times of stress. Surplus is still surplus, no matter who is running the country in Washington.

What did some of us farmers do with our first government hand-outs of long ago? Most of the allotment money went to protecting our farms with an appeasement payment. What dough was left, and with the magic of Sears catalog, a few mothers received washing machines. Those miracle wash-day marvels came equipped

with built in gasoline motors, and all necessary manual controls, including motorcycle type starting pedals. It made the farmers wives very happy.

I remembered very well the first allotment checks that were handed out in front of an old vacant bank in Davenport. We were all happy, and looking like vultures, as we waited for the bank door to open so we could grab our agriculture checks. But we were not as happy as old Gottlieb Reinbold, a friendly, dedicated husband, and the father of many children.

That day, to Mr. Reinbold the world seemed to look

a little rosier than usual. The government subsidy check gave him hope of survival. The smoke from his ever present cigar seemed to have a more cheerful whirl. Upon cashing his allotment check, he went next door, and paid a long standing hardware debt. When I left him, he was

wishing he could afford a second hand Holt combine.

It was the last time I ever heard his rather loud voice and rolling laughter. That evening, Gottlieb never made it back to his farm and family. On his way home, a highway accident took his life.

An Ordinary Week

When an ordinary week comes along, does it hold any events that are worth storing in a person's mind? Not really, but even a dull stretch can supply a little food for thought. I didn't plan any excitement that week, except to be nice to Sugar.

When the fall season arrives, it's always time for Sugar and I to go back to our weekly haunts in Spokane, and start listening to a lot of smart things. That first Sunday, as an illustration we were told of an old story, and it reminded me that women never received a fair deal from the beginning of the religious era. It was only an afterthought that woman was created. We are told she was just put together as a helper, and to soothe the lonesome male, and maybe for some other reasons.

There are one billion, 28 million Christians; 548 million Moslems, and nearly 17 million Jews. This means there are one billion, 800 million human beings on this planet that come under the sway of that Garden of Eden story, which to my way of thinking was very unfriendly to women.

As we all know, the inferior status of women has slowly changed. The struggle for equal rights has improved things quite a bit for the fair sex. Now female executives are starting to show up all over the country. Some young ladies have even become bank managers, like our own local girl, Donna McDowell. Yes, you've come a long ways, baby, since that certain fruit tree and snake story incident.

In pioneer days did the wild west miss eastern Washington? There were no rootin tootin shoot-em-up towns around here. Last Tuesday Charley Farmer from the coast stopped in. He thought I knew lots of tall tales of early day shoot-outs. Sure there were spot incidents. There were worthless stiffs around then, the same as there are now. The abundance of horses back then bred more horse thieves. As far as I know, there were no groups of Indians in Lincoln county that got mad enough

to whip out their bows and arrows to punch holes in early day settlers.

Charley was especially interested in the Harry Tracy story. It looks like Tracy's rock out in Cole's pasture is fast becoming a historical landmark. For the second time in a row, a busload of curiosity seekers, and criminal buffs journeyed to 'the rock.' Again they were given a guided tour of Mr. Tracy's closing hours of life. We repeaters are beginning to respect 'the rock' for its isolated beauty, instead of its shootin' records. The only respect that Tracy had for 'the rock' was to use it to stop the bullets that were traveling his way.

In the middle of that week, curiosity caused me to go see what my 91 year old father-in-law was up to. He has removed all the boulders from an old well casing. Now he is busy dragging all those chest size rocks across the yard, to where he is using them to make an outside cellar entrance to his retirement home.

That same week, my back only allowed me to finish up a board walk, and deck project. For a birthday treat, Ed's Rocklyn and Davenport offspring took him over to Entiat so he could see his other offspring.

The highlight of an ordinary week was topped off by going to Odessa's Deutsches Fest early morning run, and all day outing with descendants of the Germans from Russia. Odessa's big bang is fast becoming an annual institution. Rows of mobile homes came from every direction. They found parking at Odessa for three days to be eventful for entertainment, and socializing.

An hour long parade went past some buildings that were nearly as old as the town. German sausage could be seen, and had everywhere. If you liked beer and good music played by people in leather shorts, there was a large indoor space available for you. It was a bit noisy in there, because when people get together, they start talking a lot.

Will Rogers On Nicaragua

Sugar and I were fortunate to attend a slide show on Nicaragua. It was held in Rev. Roger Barr's basement. The basement was built for a crowd larger than what was there. However, it's a good feeling to know that a local minister is concerned about what's going on in Central America.

It got me to thinking, that 50 to 60 years ago, the tune about Central America was played in the same key as it is now. Our involvement seems to be without any humanitarian aim.

For resource material, I like to thank Catharine Kelly

of Portland for sending every statement Will Rogers wrote for the newspapers since 1924, and until his death in 1935. His short comments are still printed daily in a Portland paper.

On July 9, 1933, this is what Will Rogers wrote about Nicaragua: "All you read about these days is that this nation is sending their army into their neighbor's back yard. Did you know that we sent Marines into Nicaragua, Haiti, San Domingo and Vera Cruz, Mexico, one time? Anywhere in the world we could find a place where we had no business, why, there is where we were.



Unitarians and other human people on a peace March through downtown Spokane. Dr. Houff's wife, Potty is now in Nicaragua (Fall 1986).

"It was just during our adolescent period of life as a nation, when we thought it was up to us to regulate the affairs of everybody."

The rest of Will Rogers comments circled around in the late twenties and the early thirties. Quote: "Now Mr. President, I am not a-hinting that we were wrong in this particular case of Nicaragua. But when we start out trying to make everyone have moral elections, why, it just don't look like we are going to have Marines enough to go around. Course, we don't need 'em here at home."

"These countries don't always look on a fellow that is out in the hills as a bandit . . . I tell you, if we could just stay out of there and let Nicaragua alone, they might like us."

"Did you ever notice how much more peaceful it is when our Marines are at home instead of prowling around? . . . I don't think people have realized yet the most important thing these transoceanic flights have brought out, and that is the quicker transporting of our Marines to other people's wars."

"Years ago transportation held us back, sometimes we were a week late. But with airplanes there's no excuse. So our slogan is now: Have your wars wherever and as far away as you want, but on the opening day we will be there."

It's ironic how things are still about the same as in Will Rogers' days. In the case of El Salvador and Guatemala, the question is: Is our security threatened because people are fighting against a military government which has kept them poor and hungry for over 50 years?

Instead of sowing death and destruction, we could be contributing to cultural and economic progress in Nicaragua.

Since Will Rogers' days, we had a horrible world war, and have now forgiven Germany and Japan for their evil deeds. Also learned to love their Volkswagon and Toyota, but not the Russians. For our protection, I guess we have to fear someone. It gives us an excuse to make scads of destructive things. Maybe stopping such terrifying build-ups is too human.



Earth people's policy: Live and let live.

Two Walt Kiks

Several summers ago Sugar and I joined up with a large group of in-laws in Colville. They were on a family tree investigating binge. It's sort of interesting to know where we came from, and how the rest of the scattered relatives made out. Anyone snooping through family history will find a few scars, and blights on the branches.

Usually we have more in common with our close friends than we do with relatives. Sure it's sort of important to know what kind of stock we came from. It gives us a chance to figure out why we act the way we do. Genes do play a vital part. It's hard to make a talker out of a person that is born not to be so noisy.

Environment plays an important role too. We can do screwy things if we grew up where race prejudice runs rampant. Especially when one feels inferior to others. Us-

ing minority races as stepping stones to achieve greatness, can make a person feel cocky and superior.

For example: There are two Walt Kiks running around. No we are not clones, just cousins at about the same age, but living in different countries. The other Walt Kik lives in Germany, and got into a lot of trouble. Yours truly was luckier. Partly because grandfather took a powder, and beat it over to God's Country on a boat. He didn't care to fight made in Germany' wars.

The Walt Kik in Germany seems to have gotten started in life normally by eating lots of sour kraut and German sausage. But when he grew up, he somehow was brain washed by a bunch of meanies. Walt then started hating a lot of Jews who didn't do him any harm, except maybe take up some survival space. He started to deter-

iorate rapidly when he joined Hitler's Home Guard.

Walt spent all his spending money on leather boots, and a motorcycle. On weekends, he did a lot of practicing by playing big shot on his charged up motor bike. Before World War Two set in, Sugar and I received a large photo of him all dressed up in his uniform. He had an important look in his eyes.

When we quit corresponding with Walt, my brother-in-law took over the job of writing a couple of sassy letters back to him. All letters from Walt ceased when Germany's holocaust got started. About a year after Germany caved in, we got a letter from him. It was mailed from Paris. Once again I had Freida Mielke translate it for me.

Walt stated it took this long before they released him from occupational prison. When the war ended, he was caught being involved in a take over of a French village. He had to prove he was just taking orders from higher ups. Since they found him innocent as a babe (???) he was on his way home. Walt must have joined the born again trail, because he wanted me to read Psalms 119. He claimed that chapter helped him.

Seven years ago, my sister went to Germany. While there, she visited with cousin Walt. He had a toothache that day, and was nursing a bad eye. He now owns his own furniture factory, and has a contract to sell the Russians a lot of tables, sofas, and stuff like that. — I wonder if he still likes to ride motorcycles.



A patriotic feeling came cruising through my body. (1976)

No Baby Sitters

The year of 1916, baby sitters were scarcer than hen's teeth. My sister and I were only preschoolers. We had to learn to stay at home all day without the guiding hand of a babysitter.

No, it wasn't a case of child abuse. Our parents didn't run off to some place like a tavern. Mom wasn't well that summer. We were told that she had to be taken clear up to Spokane every week for treatments. I like to think that sis and I ~~were~~ made out of the 'right stuff.' Most of the time, we did feel sort of brave.

After receiving our weekly by-by hugs, we were left behind to witness the Model T disappearing in a cloud of dust. We would look at each other for a while, and then begin playing that we were at a camp meeting.

However, several times when we were left alone, 'drop ins' supplied highlights, and some responsibility for Ethel and me. One long parentless day, in the midst of our play time, a bum came walking down the lane. He scared us enough that we sort of shook. The ice was broken when the bum asked if he could get something to eat.

Quickly we ran to the house. While sis was busy cutting up potatoes to fry, I was stuffing the cook stove full of wood. Dad always had a small can of kerosene to start the fire with. It's a wonder we didn't burn the house down.

The bum was fed a diet of fried eggs and a plate full of potatoes. After getting a free meal down his stomach, the bum left no tips.

Old Gus Kruger, a Rocklyn cattle farmer, was our weekly meat delivery guy during the summer months. Gus would knock a steer in the head, and peddle it to the farmers. The next week he usually would 'do in' a calf, so he could have veal as his speciality for the day. His Model T Ford held a shed like cabinet in the back that was full of fresh meat.

We kids were spending another day alone when Gus Kruger drove up with his mobile butcher shop. I told Gus I didn't know what part of the steer to leave here. He said my mom usually wanted a roast and some steak. While Gus was setting part of a chopped up steer on a box, I told him I had no money to pay for it.

Old Gus had a dry sense of humor which I didn't understand. He thought a bit, then finally said, "If you promise not to eat the meat, and put it down the cellar 'til it's paid for, I'll leave it here."

Golly, that was a chore. Our old cellar hadn't been used for a long time, as it was pretty well caved in. It took some time to get those two bundles of steer meat down that spider webbed cellar.

When the sky began to darken, sister and I always started to crave for papa and mama to return. When the stars came out, sis and I would manage to crawl up on the blacksmith shop roof. From there we could see the car lights as they came up over the creek hill.

It was a disappointment when the magneto driven lights didn't dim down for the turn off. It meant we had to wait on the roof for another pair of lights to pop up.

Eventually, a pair of car lights made it into our lane. That particular night found us running up to dad to let him know that Gus Kruger wanted the meat put in the old cellar, since it wasn't paid for. Dad smiled, and said, "That sounds like old Gus. He was just having some fun with you kids."

The folks always brought back goodies from Burgans Spokane store. Usually fancy city made bakery stuff. Sometimes something wearable to brighten up our bodies.

God Is Love

In April, 1986, I received a local letter representing an excellent national organization that has molded many a young lad in the proper ways of life. They are asking support for this American ideal.

But this organization for the last two years, stated it still holds firm that each boy must declare a belief in God to become a member. Now that's not very nice because it isn't fair. I don't like to see such a wonderful organization like the Boy Scouts of America discriminate against some of our future generation, just because they have a different concept of our world and the universe in general.

The policy making of this well known youth club has it down to this: No oath, No service, No fellowship. It's like when the popular, "No shoes, No Shirt, No service" signs were the order of the day, except this ruling is more devastating. It can separate a boy from his friends, all because he was raised under a different influence. A belief in God is great, and American as Apple pie. But if your concept of God is one of nature, spirit of life, it wouldn't be good enough to qualify for the Scouts.

A belief in God brings out many concepts of what it means to believe in God. Last fall this was brought out ably on a four way planned discussion. To the Quakers,

believing in God makes for peace on earth with no wars allowed. Believing in a strong fundamental God? That's too scary. And the list goes on.

Before I slipped away from my inherited influence, I liked the gentle God that I believed in. My Christian upbringing days were spent in a country church. The church members lived by a motto which hung on the church wall, it read: 'God is Love.' Our minister saw God as the fatherly loving kind, whose job was to put lots of love in our hearts. With those good thoughts, we learned to accept everyone, regardless of their convictions or beliefs.

I guess the Scouts' policy making fellow has a sterner demanding God in mind. I'm thankful that our old Rocklyn minister when he came to the rough spots in the Bible, was kind enough to simply pass over them.

Nevertheless, everyone knows the Boy Scouts have loads of other good rules to live by. I was a Scout briefly while in California and had a lot of fun, but didn't take nearly the time to learn all the good stuff they had to offer. However, I did learn how to save matches by starting fires, via Indian style. My friend had a whole chest full of pins and medals for being smart and ambitious. I missed the hikes with these outdoor boys, as I had a paper route.



Walkers For Peace. This group stopped in on their march from Montana to Seattle. Maney raised an walk mode it possible far a couple to visit Russian forms with a message of love and other good things.

It would be nice if the Scouts' policy makers would loosen their segregated hold of enforcing a belief in God. Wouldn't that be the Christian thing to do to show your love for every child of every background? The danger of polluting the boys would be nil. In fact it would have the opposite effect.

Let's take the YWCA for instance. It started out as a strong protective force in protecting the young Christian women from the evils of the outside world. So naturally their belief in God came automatically.

The Y once was very segregated. No men were allowed to join. Mixed swimming was a no-no. If no separate pools were available, a rope was placed between the men and women. No lustful looks were allowed to exchange across the ropes, and many not so dangerous rules were enforced.

After 126 years of advancing service the Association now draws together membership from every diverse experience and faith, so they may join in the struggle for

peace and justice, freedom and dignity for all people.

A person can't help but feel good all over about the Y's imperative statement which is printed on the annual report covers: "To thrust our collective power toward the elimination of racism wherever it exists and by any means necessary."

Now since I've expressed my feelings, I feel better and will meet the Scouts' request for a donation. I hope they will meet their goal. What is God to me? I won't get a Boy Scout badge for my answer. It's found in a two verse poem that I tore out of an inspirational booklet years ago, it reads: "If God speaks - It will not be in decaying scriptures - Nor in towering cathedrals of glass and stone - Nor through the mouths of holy men - With jeweled miters and gilded robes.

"If God speaks - It will be in the rustle of the wind in the leaves - In the seagull's cry and the roar of the surf - And in the diamond web of a million dancing stars on a summer night."

Billy Sunday

A while back a question was asked in The Wilbur Register, "Who was the first well known evangelist?" Any senior citizen that's worth their salt should remember it was Billy Sunday. Without being biased I'll try and give a historical account of old Billy Sunday when he was in the Northwest. He made quite a showing in the Spokane and Olympia area.

All this took place about the time I was born. But the information I have is well documented through kept articles, a family old time post card album, and my auntie Lou, who was a strong follower of Billy Sunday.

First let's go back and find out how life got started for Billy Sunday. As a young guy Billy played baseball with the Chicago White Socks. When he got married, he became a Presbyterian. Through the church, he got a job at the Chicago YMCA. After a spell, he jumped the gun and went on to become assistant to a small fry evangelist. In 1896, Sunday picked up a song leader and began his career as a revivalist and held mass meetings in towns and cities all over the U.S. He preached a vivid version of an Evangelical-Fundamentalist, and was noted for his flamboyant acrobatics in the pulpit. In fact Billy Sunday was more of an entertainer than an evangelist, whose flare for showmanship made him very popular. Wealthy businessmen found it financially healthy to contribute to Sunday's support when he came to their towns.

Most Spokane churches said they would help sponsor Billy Sunday if he would preach about the evils of drink and the dens of iniquity. But when Billy was ushered into Spokane, one of his main sponsors was Jimmy Durkin, Spokane's biggest liquor store and saloon owner.

As soon as Billy got settled, Durkin started 'working on him.' He picked up Billy at his hotel and took him for a ride in his carriage so everyone on the streets could see them together. For publicity, Durkin placed a sign over his saloon entrance, stating: "If Your Children Need Shoes, Don't Buy Booze."

Jimmy Durkin dined with Billy Sunday, and when Billy was preaching in his tent that held 3,000 people, Durkin would sit in the front row on the platform with Billy so everyone could see him.

People came in droves to hear and see Billy Sunday, because he was so powerful in showing off his display of emotions. While in Spokane he got rather hysterical and broke a chair over the pulpit to emphasize a point. In one of his sermons, Billy related the story of David and Goliath. You'd have to be a fight fan to appreciate the story, but this is the way he described it. "David picked up a rock and put it in his sling shot. It hit Goliath in the coconut, between the lamps. He dropped to the mat, took the count, and turned his toes to the daisies."

The rootin, tootin Billy Sunday was also a sharpie. A heckler, who shouted the question, then famous in all agnostic or atheist circles, "Who was Cain's wife?" Billy Sunday shot back the reply, "I respect any seeker of knowledge but I want to warn you, young man, don't risk being lost to salvation by too much inquiring after other men's wives."

Some of the churches and Billy Sunday decided to charter a train and go to Olympia to sell the legislature on the idea of prohibition. In order to do this, it was necessary to raise some dough, so Billy decided to ask for donations. He wanted to know if anyone would give \$100. If so please stand up. Jimmy Durkin figured this would be big publicity for him, so he was the first to stand. By now, Billy was getting his belly full of Durkin. He demanded that he close his dive that was sending a lot of guys to hell. Durkin tried to sit down three times, but with 3,000 people watching, Billy made him stand up and each time he got a bit rougher with Durkin. Billy finally demanded \$1,000 from him. With that kind of donation, Jimmy Durkin contributed to his downfall faster than he cared to.

Later when another evangelist, Gypsy Smith came to Spokane, Durkin didn't look him up. He had seen the light, and the show was over as far as he was concerned.

But the reformers rolled along and went over to the Capitol and sold the legislature on the idea to give prohibition a try. It was bye-bye to all the saloons in the state of Washington. The 'wets' had to wait a while for the speak-easies to get going.

Billy Sunday's Spokane crusade was partly financed by selling scads of postcards of himself in various preach-

ing poses. They ranged all the way from thumping the pulpit with his fist, hard like, to holding a watch in front of his right leg that was parked on a chair. The caption read, "God's counting time on you." Whatever that meant.

Billy Sunday's popularity waned after 1920 when his style became old stuff. He was called upon from time to time to display a little of his old fire. In 1935 he passed away in the town that gave him his start, Chicago.

The Solace Tree

About a 15 minute jog west from the Rocklyn sign post, will bring any interested person to an abandoned highway. The road will take you past where Sugar grew up to the ripe age of 18. Then she flew the coop to live with me. That abandoned strip of lumpy asphalt brings back many memories.

Just as the road makes a bend to the north, there sets an old empty gravel pit. On top of a bluff that overlooks this forsaken hole, stood a cherry tree that has died since a tragic event took place there. But its lateral roots now send up several bush-like trees.

A couple of decades ago, Sugar got to hankering for her old scab-rock and sagebrush scenery, so we started using this vacant road for our physical fitness program. One spring day we spotted a car parked by the bluff with the cherry tree on top. Soon recognized this tall old timer as Roy Borck. He had just climbed down from inspecting the blossoms on this lonesome cherry tree. "I'm glad the frost didn't damage the blossoms," Roy stated, adding "The prospects for a few cherries looks good."

Upon leaving Roy standing by his familiar old car, I told Sugar that when I was a kid, Roy would drive up to the Rocklyn store on Sunday afternoons in his version of a racing car. The bullet shaped hand made body was bolted on to a frame that held a model T motor. It was quite a show-off rig, and was looked over by everyone while waiting for the passenger train to pull in from Spokane. He built the cockpit just big enough to hold himself. But it was a thrill to see Roy go tearing down the road with a rooster tail of dust following behind him.

The next season, just by fate, we found Roy back

again at the lone cherry tree. This time the blossoms had fallen to the ground, and the stems holding the cherry shaped buds were drying up. He had a pair of pruning shears in his hand, and was busy whacking off many branches. "It needs pruning to bring back life," he said, "I hope next year to see blossoms making cherries that will set."

We talked about the early days of the tractors. Roy used to encourage me by stating that tractors were here to stay, and I should not fall apart if a total breakdown occurred. He was my pacifier 'til tractors took over the farms. Roy was a much wanted combine separator man, and drew high wages when harvest time rolled around.

The third year we found evidence that Roy had been checking on his roadside cherry tree. Limbs were again shaped to give the tree grace. But the sickly look of that tree showed signs that its days were numbered.

That same year when the August heat was the hottest and the wheat was about all shaved off, Roy became depressed. Upon finding a farewell note, Bill Livingston and George Borck got to the cherry tree on the bluff too late.

Roy loved to see things grow. During our 1931 dust bowl, he used to tell us that tender wheat plants needed large clods to protect them from the harsh winds. "A person can harrow spring seeded fields too much, and break up the needed protection," he would say.

Bill and his dad had befriended Roy during his retirement years. Yet despondency had set in and taken its toll.

Weddings Vary

In less than a week, some Rocklynites had the privilege of attending two different kinds of weddings. The first one was a formal affair. The Gooley-Mielke shindig filled a large local church to the brim. It was followed by a formal wedding reception at the bride's parents' farm. Live music and food was plentiful. Happy congratulations and fellowship lasted 'til there was no one left. I'm sure the newlyweds were well satisfied with that kind of send-off.

Now from the other side of the fence: Four days later, on a high mountain top north of Davenport, a different kind of wedding took place. The outdoor attendance was only about 50. However, there were guests from Edwall, Wilbur, Reardan, Davenport, Spokane and

Seattle. Also a plane brought in a sister and a mother of the bride from Chicago. The rest were local natives, including three dogs and a horse.

Getting there was no easy chore. It was not like the average weddings, where you are escorted down a soft carpeted aisle to a pew. In contrast, there was this mountain that rose from a humble valley. It was your problem how to get up to the top to witness this wedding ceremony.

Half way up this precipitously steep mountain, I decided to look down. I froze when I realized there was nothing to stop us if slipping took place. That hard rock bottom looked mighty fatal.



Newlyweds Ron and Linda Mielke.

On becoming helpless, Sugar left me and accepted aid from a young native. Hugh Williams had to come down from the top with his mountain goat type of shoes and rescue me.

Some of the valley dwellers found an easier pass up to the top. A home movie camera with sound equipment was lugged up. Also a tape recorder, cameras by the handfuls, and preacher Barr's ceremonial gown.

Bouquets of home grown white gladiola got up there somehow, and were artfully arranged among the rocks. The necks of the adult guest were hung with red rose hip beads that were made by the bride and groom.

With no aisle to walk down, the bride, Terri Koenig and groom Rico Reed stood precariously overlooking all that deep and beautiful scenery. It was kind of an 'earth wedding' that included everything close to nature. During the wedding, little children were busy blowing pretty soap bubbles that floated past the bridal party and down over that scary below. Rev. Roger Barr so ably performed the wedding ceremony, emphasizing the spirit and beauty of life. It was a refreshing service put on by sincere people.



Earth people's wedding

Hugging

A couple of years ago when Sugar and I returned from Spokane, my sister surprised us by getting the family clan together to remind me it was 45 years ago that I ran off with Sugar so I could marry her—robbing the cradle, so to speak. Being thankful to be around for all these years caused me to sort of choke up, so hugging was the only way I could express myself.

What's wrong with hugging? Not a darn thing. A lot of us thrive on hugging. It makes the mind work more humanly, and opens up the channel of friendliness. It doesn't matter whether it's a friendly squeeze or a nice quick hug. Oh sure, you'll get some feedback from certain reserved folks, especially when a hug is held a second too

long with the opposite sex. Strange as it may seem, in grief the hug is never questioned, even by the most puritanical person, no matter how long someone is held.

It seems like males are more reserved when it comes to hugging, especially another male. Usually this man to man hugging is saved for that long-time-no-see event.

You can always tell the non-huggable ones. They stiffen up like a board when you try to fit them into your arms. For the reserved folks, a pat on the head, or the squeezing of the arm is a great substitute. After all, most of us are associating in a stand-offish handshaking culture.

All this handshaking stuff got started during the cave man days. It happened when our hairy ancestors met another strange cave man. They grabbed each others hand. It was for protection to find out if the other guy was carrying a destructive rock in his hands.

An affectionate or caring hug is nothing new. If a person has never been hugged, it could be tough for that person to grow up correctly. Nature planted this hugging stuff in infants, and needs to be given back to them in therapeutic doses throughout life. Case in point: This fall, a little girl was lost in the Northtown Sears store. She ran up to a stranger that she thought she could trust. After being lifted up, and exchanging hugs, her stress was relieved. This assured the tot of her personal safety. She then pointed to where she thought her mother could be found.

There are a bunch of people in Spokane where Sugar and I socialize that are very huggable. If the minister spots personal friends that have missed our services for a spell, a sincere hug is given, and warm greetings are exchanged. Sometimes I like to miss a few Sundays just to receive that returning prodigal son type of hug.

Since we are all designed to thrive on affection, tenderness, etc., crying is also a normal expression of emotion. (According to a lot of smart guys that study such things.)

During the post war years, the then Mayor of Spokane, Kenneth Lawson, warmed the Rocklyn church pulpit up one Sunday by stating that we should find a good reason to have a good cry once in a while. We are all sentimental people, whether we admit it or not. Alex Haley, the author of 'Roots' said he never cared to trust a guy that says he never has cried.

As a kid, there used to be a big discrimination as to who was doing the crying. While attending Rocklyn's one room schoolhouse, Edna Grob was found crying because of some embarrassment. We all rallied around her, and felt sorry for her. But when a similar thing happened to Benny Hall, we called him a cry baby. His emotions were so set on edge that he wanted to fight anyone that got near him.

A few years ago after taking part in a protest march that ended up at Riverfront Park, a Vietnam veteran tried to give a speech on the horror of witnessing the raw killings of that war. In the middle of his address, he broke down and wept uncontrollably, and stumbled against a tree. He then sank to the ground. A man ran up and hugged him. The thought that someone cared, and understood, brought temporary healing that he needed so badly.

A discussion took place on our way back to our cars. It was agreed that when you are at a loss witnessing such mental suffering, a wordless hug is the best medicine.

Love Boat

Before the cement in the Coulee Dam was thoroughly cured, Lake Roosevelt had its own 'Love Boat' cruising around. I doubt that Captain Merrill Stubing of TV Love Boat fame was even born at that time.

Our own Miss Coulee had her captain too, when she journeyed up and down the inland waters. Captain Frank Selde may not have had romantic eyes, but he was more amusing and entertaining than Merrill. With a grin from ear to ear, Frank steered the pleasure boat, Miss Coulee up to the loading ramp at Fort Spokane. It was harvest time of 1942, when 60 of us rented this holiday boat for an all day Sunday cruise up the new man-made lake.

Excitement ran high when Frank and Leonard Hutsell pointed this cruiser north with its load of human cargo. Seeing the shoreline scenery move was real fascinating to some of us.

Harvest had just begun, so a lot of the more serious minded farmers were leaning over the railing, talking about the crops and watching the water split alongside the boat. The seasoned wives just sat inside with their lunch baskets and peeked through the windows at the lofty mountains passing by.

For Sugar and I, it was our first group romantic outing. Communications on board brought my sister-in-law and farmer George a little closer to saying 'I do.' For my fresh married brother-in-law, it was like an extended honeymoon, as the two spent most of the time as silhouette figures on the bow of the ship.

There wasn't as much hanky-panky going on as seen on the real Love Boat. The double decked Miss

Coulee was big enough so everyone finally had his or her thing a-going. Reserved-like farmers began loosening up a bit. Jokes and kidding of the simplest form became a hysterical event. Even the lunch-box sitting wives left their windows to join the fun.

A refreshing waterfall midway toward Canada was where the boat docked. Finding a flat spot, we spread our picnic lunch out on the grass. More fun took place, 'til the boat crew figured it was time to head for home. A simple but slippery trail back to the boat gave the young bucks a chance to help the lovelies over rocks and other stumbling objects.

What happened to Miss Coulee? Well, prosperity set in after the war. People began buying their individual happiness. Factories started turning out high-powered speed boats, so fun loving people could go zooming over the water with skiers holding on behind.

That left Miss Coulee with absolutely nothing to do. Lonely and rejected, she was pulled out of Lake Roosevelt and drug overland to Lake Chelan. Here the mountains were taller and loaded with more growing things. She changed her name to "Lady of the Lake." It caused pride once again to enter her hull.

Right now, this proud 'Lady of the Lake' is carrying lots of people up and down the glacier-like lake. Serving pleasure to the sight seers, the lonely ones and those who are happily married. A sort of northwest Love Boat.

Let's Be Sweet

A while back, I was paying a call on a guy about closing an old business account. While trying to come to an agreement in the living room, his wife came in and asked if he knew where the vacuum cleaner attachment was. "It's where it should be," was his answer. He then turned to me and said, "She will find it, all she has to do is to use her head."

When I was getting ready to leave, this guy responded to a knock on the door. A middle aged lady was lost, and wanted to know how to get to a certain place. He told her in such details how to get to her destination that she could easily visualize the kind of scenery she would be seeing. When the lost lady was about to leave, he said, "Wait a minute, I'll draw you a map."

That sort of bugged me. For all I know, his wife could still be looking for that vacuum cleaner attachment.

When a young guy, I saw this same fellow operate at Grange dances. This live wire was a very courteous guy. A sort of a gallant knight. He would dash around the car to open the other door for his date. He probably had the habit of lifting his hat off his head when the opposite sex went by.

As a young fellow, I didn't do all those fancy things. I would have made out better if the Women's Liberation Movement would have been in effect. I sort of like to approach the opposite sex on an equal base. When Sugar and I were fresh married, Sugar tried to grade me up a little, by asking if I would walk on the street side of the sidewalk with her. (It was the custom in those days.) To make her happy, I did. I guess it was to protect women if a car came running up onto the sidewalk.

Getting back to being nice. What's wrong with living with the thought that any day could be the last day? Would you then bark at your wife?

The best cure for such inconsideration is to take out the old album. Call your wife to come into the living room, even if she is busy looking for a cleaner attachment. Snuggle rather close together. As the pages of youthful pictures are turned, begin to reminisce of bygone days. Memorable thoughts of happiness and past dreams will be renewed and make you feel very sweet.

Then turn and look at each other. The aging process will tell you that time is shortening the road that you will be together. You will then realize there is less time left to be helpful and considerate.

Never Too Old

You old guys, when you were young, and watching a parade, didn't soldiers marching down the streets with rifles over their shoulders look like full grown men? Now days, don't they look like very young lads? I used to think anyone having some white hair sticking out, was supposed to take a back seat in life.

In the early 1930s, Will Rogers made a movie titled, 'Life Begins at 40.' When I went to see that movie 50 years ago, I thought it was too late in life to start anything really worthwhile. My dad was in his 40s when he quit farming. As far as I was concerned, his peak had been reached.

Years ago, there was an ad that sold some kind of snake oil for men suffering from prostate problems. The ad showed a rather shaky man all humped over sitting in a chair with a blanket across his lap. For those that remembered that ad, a caption under the picture read: "If you are 40 or older, beware of prostate trouble."

I used to think anyone over 50 was set in their ways, and over the hill. When a visiting guest preacher who was pushing 60 came to our house, mom told us kids to be nice and respect the old fellow. Upon arriving, and before the minister sat down in our well placed chair, he asked me how old I was. An audible 10 came out of my mouth. He smiled, and said, "In 10 more years, you will be 20" (A brilliant calculation) Question no. two. "Have you been a good boy?" A head nod said yes. I then received a pat on the head from the sad eyed minister as he started to sit down.

After doing my Christian duty for mom, the outdoors looked mighty refreshing to me. Thank goodness, the ministers of today are not the boogie man of long ago with that old man image.

I used to believe that some of my old friends were pushing their luck too far. George Gunning, at that time had turned 73 on the time clock. When he told me he was planning on building a new house in Davenport, I said to him, "Golly, how come at your age?" George replied, "Yea I know, according to the Bible, I've lived my allotted time, but I'm not intending to leave 'til I have to."

Then, years later, when I reached 75, I surprised Sugar by saying, "Let's tear down part of our house, and build on something brand new. And wouldn't it be fun to walk from the old house that has a history and go right into rooms that you have dreamed about all your life?" That was a dangerous way-out statement to make. It overcharged Sugar's talents, and it left me with no room for backing out.

I guess it's worth it, if for nothing else than just to see Sugar living on a manic high. But is it logical? Are some of us acting like kids, and don't realize that the life cycle will soon be completed? Anyway for the first time, I can understand to some extent why my older relatives when they retired, built new homes in Ritzville.

For practical reasons it's best for us not to buy household equipment with a warranty over 15 years, or to build a house out of bricks that will soon be used mostly as a monument to someone's past life. Anyone planning on what we did should within reason make a house that is suitable for either the very young or the very old. Unnecessary stairways and steps can be a hazard to your life. Slick floors and small booby trap rugs can land you in a wheel chair.

By golly, I too am beginning to get excited about the new modern section nailed onto this old house. To make sense, it's best that we start calling it, 'Our retirement home.'

Senior Citizens

Golly how time does fly! It just seems like yesterday when all I could think about was to junk my school days, and talk my dad into letting me come back to Washington, so I could plant lots of wheat and watch it grow. At that time, dad had reached the half century mark, and I had made it to the ripe age of 18. The best way to grow old is not to be in a hurry about it. After all, we senior citizens are just kids that's getting up in years. As the old saying goes, "Years will wrinkle the skin, but lack of enthusiasm wrinkles the soul."

I have 12 years of practice on how to be a senior citizen, but so far I haven't made much headway. I have not been to any of the senior centers throughout our county. I hear tell they serve mighty good food at those places, and that they are needed by lots of retired folks.

I've been told that you can earn a certain amount of money while in retirement, so you can live higher on the hog. There are many weather beaten senior citizens that just love to keep their hands in the farming business. Not for greed, but it's a way of life that's been drilled into them so deeply they can't seem to bow out.

For the elite retirees, there is a special place made for them. My relative's wife, Carolyn Maurer, beat it to Sun City, Arizona, when widowed, and loves every minute of it. It's a classy place all right, but the formality and monitored rules would shorten my retirement life considerably.

Some of us just can't adjust to being away from our environment very long, especially in retirement years. A lot of us retirees also inherited the ability of enjoying our nesting place, minus the migration pattern. I'm a four season guy who likes to soak in all the seasons that rotate themselves year after year. It's good to leave home for short periods of time, it makes you appreciate the returning road home.

This fall, nostalgia went through me while standing lonely like in a field that had been emptied by combines, and trucks. A sniff of fall air was drifting over the stubble field. The stinging rays of the sun warmed one side of my body, while the north side of my sun tanned rib cage felt a little chilly.

All the sensation I got out of harvest this year was a trip to the warehouse office to see what my share of the crop would amount to. Driving past those tall elevators reminded me of by gone harvest days when I used to take in the last load of wheat for the day. Sugar would then scoot on home to slosh herself with water by standing under an outdoor shower. From there, she had to run into the house, and get supper on the table. It hit me that Sugar and I will never repeat those many harvest scenes again.

There is no future by living in the past, but remembering the bygone days is a blessing we should all be thankful for. It gives a person the instinct to reach out for another day to add to his autobiography.

A Golden Anniversary

If you happen to be lucky enough to share a bed with the same partner for half a century, it's time to throw a celebration of victory for lasting that long. That's what the Davenport Assembly of God did when they threw a 50th anniversary bash for Bud and Beulah Olsen in May, 1985.

When we got through kissing and congratulating these fifty year veterans of married bliss, Sugar and I separated, and wandered around through a roomfull of faces, while fellowshipping with old acquaintances that took separate roads in life. They were folks that we usually don't see 'til an important wedding takes place, or another golden anniversary arrives on the scene.

Memories have a strange way of unfolding. It only takes a little mental shifting of gears to recognize old friends that have developed a more matured, and well settled look. Time does show the wear and tear on all of us. Wrinkles change the map on our faces, but most everyone retains the same familiar giggle, and smile that makes it easy to identify forgotten friends from teenage days.

Most of us oldsters still love our mates, as well as little children. We should try to keep that same stored up feeling that makes life go around.

This golden anniversary event made a guy realize that things were different 50 years ago when Bud and Beulah took their vows to live a married life. Did couples

get married with all the wedding bell trimmings in those days. No, not that I know of. These big deal weddings didn't get started 'til after Adolph Hitler's defeat. It wasn't until then that daddies could afford to put on a show for their departing daughters. Neither were the country boys able to flash through their home towns in a sport car, looking for a date to date.

When Beulah and Bud decided to get married, all they did was to get in touch with preacher Kroneman who had a parish, and a church down the street a ways. They had him come over to Beulah's family home where he tied the marriage knot.

To zoom in on Bud's bride of fifty years, one has to go back to an old established wheat ranch in the Rocklyn area. Beulah is the youngest of Charley and Julia Rux's string of daughters. They all arrived in orderly fashion without any time out for a brother. Mabel, Aileen, Bessie, and finally Beulah. In fact, it was sort of luck that Beulah made it.

Her dad wanted a son so bad that when word reached him out in the harvest field that his wife gave birth to another girl, (Bessie) he was so disappointed that he refused to go home. It took three days before Charley felt like leaving his custom thrashing crew to go see daughter number three. Charley and his wife again tried for a boy, but Beulah arrived instead.

Charley made the best of his all girl family. They

grew up healthy like, and helped supply a more equal ratio between the boys and the skimpy girl population. Later Beulah carried out the same family tradition by having just four girls too.

The Rocklyn district at one time had three one room schoolhouses. They were scattered all around so the kids wouldn't have to take all forenoon to get there. Two of Beulah's sisters, Bessie and Aileen, became school marms and taught in two of Rocklyn's schools. Country preacher H.B. Mann, taught in the stricter Rocklyn school that had a church nearby.

Two of the Rux sisters rode horses to the main Rocklyn schoolhouse. Bessie was the teacher, and little Beulah was one of her pupils. Beulah and her scattering of school mates were the last of the Rocklynites to attend this one room country school.

When Beulah entered her last years of schooling in Davenport, it seemed like Bud was waiting for her. They became high school sweethearts. Lots of Sundays were spent socializing with local couples that had matrimonial intentions on their minds. After some simple outings that those depression days had to offer, Beulah and Bud made a decision to try for a long married life.

That same year, seven other local couples took up marriage vows. It nearly wiped out all the singles. It left only me, and a handful of others that couldn't get it altogether. However, that long wait of five years brought Sugar.



Sugar's wheat hauling days are over.

Aquatics

If you are carrying more weight than your body likes to haul around, and your legs are shot, running is not for you. Swimming is your best medicine. At the YWCA in Spokane, we have proof that tired housewives who live under everyday stress are benefitted by swimming, 'til their bodies say they had enough.

It's up to your physical condition on how many laps you can put away. Most swimmers reach euphoria by doing 10 to 20 laps. Sugar reaches her glow point when she does 25 laps. Because I get too excited when I enter the pool, it takes me between 45 to 50 laps before I feel calmed down and recharged.

Swimming can also do special health tricks to your body. A Vietnam veteran who has the jitters from seeing all that killing, is now able to replace valium with lots of lap swimming. A blind author and composer, Hans Moldenhauer, took midday swims at the Y because it made his brains run smoother. He was then able to write better stuff. We have not seen him since his seeing eye wife, Rosaleen, died of cancer.

A few years ago, a slim, worn out housewife whose religion made it OK for her to have more children than she could handle, depended on swimming as a tonic during her years of diaper changing.

Wednesday, and sometimes Tuesdays or Fridays, finds Sugar and me up at the YWCA. Lately our pool friends are Harvey, a retired lawyer and wife, Lee. They found out that swimming back and forth keeps the circulation in order. Also Air Force pilot, Bill and wife Phyllis, scoot across the water for the same reason.

Don, a border line leukemia guy, keeps himself on the happy side of life by swimming. He is the picture of health, but has to watch out for infection. Then there is old Ed. He saw more winters than any of us, and is no tornado in the water. But his wobbly dog paddling keeps his mind and hands steady enough to paint lots of beautiful, old time country scenes. Sometimes Millie Guhlke from Davenport shows up in a swim suit and joins us.

Virginia, the slick looking Avon saleslady, also loves to keep her frame from sagging. Virginia swims as often as we do. In fact at one time there were four generations swimming in the pool. Virginia's mother was swimming with her, while her daughter was swimming around, and watching the little fourth generation girl having fun in all that water.

Across from the lap lanes, it's always a treat to watch young mothers dunk their babies below the water line. Soon the little tots learn to paddle and kick up a storm.

There is a pool exercise and swim class for pregnant women. The purpose is to make healthy mothers, and give the unborn a natural feeling of 'rock-a-by-baby.' When an overly pregnant woman is missing from the class, we know that another life has seen daylight.

It's interesting to note that there are different levels of physical endurance. I knew a paid instructor who after exhausting her participants in three separate half hour classes, swam over to our lanes, and did her own thing by doing a string of speedy laps.

Swimming is not the only thing you can do at the Y. There are programs that specialize in about anything you

desire. If your feet need a strengthening job, try the fancy ballet class. If you find yourself panting when you empty the garbage can, try the vigorous endurance class. If you would like to view your feet from the standing position, but can't, a weight reducing program is there for you. A pumping iron workout place is used for those that like to have an extra supply of muscles at the proper body location. Also you can get a massage without any hanky panky going on.

There is a weekly fellowship that one shares with the Y personnel. Sandy, the pool check in girl, back from a vacation, reported about the latest goings on at the Knotts Berry Farm. It's always informative to have a chat with two busy ladies, Pat Miller and Lois Kester. They are

the main cogs that keep the YWCA turning.

There are oodles of women including Sugar that donate some of their time at the Y. Each has a specific job to be responsible for. As far as finances allow, the arms of tender care reach out to many helpful programs. Handicap and 'special people' programs are going full steam. Also the Alternatives to Domestic Violence Program offers the best crisis clinic for women and children who get battered around by dangerous men.

Getting back to that neat pool again. If you are afraid of water that's deeper than your bathtub, and scared that you might sink like a rock, take some swim lessons. Then come over and join the rest of the swimmers. All in all winter aquatics is a haven for a lot of us.

Running Stuff

My mother weighed 215 pounds when she developed lots of gallstones. She was a short lady, so it compounded all her weight into a small area. The surplus pounds eventually contributed to her early death. Mom dearly loved lots of coffee kucken, noodles, and German sausage.

A lot of my overweight friends are beautiful people. I love them all. I wish they could live a safer life. All they have to do is to shove no more food down their throats than their bodies need. Usually that is too simple a way to reduce. But there is hope by taking the long hard road.

One choice is to go out and buy an armload of diet books. Then spend the next few months trying to figure out which book offers the best magic advice for reducing. There are books that even allow for a little cheating, like swallowing a piece of chocolate cake every once in a while.

Some of my heavy friends tell me they find solace by joining a weight watchers salon, where they are able to share their heavy problems with others. A couple of my hefty friends won a victory by dumping their excess weight at such a reducing parlor. But later on, one of them slid back into the fat pit.

Another way to lose weight but it's expensive is to remodel or build a new house. Sugar got so excited that she forgot to eat for pleasure and lost twelve pounds. But when the house finally got put together, her body was back to wanting to gain weight all over again. Sugar says it's a struggle all the way when it comes to dumping pounds.

A religious heavy I knew told her boyfriend that he could quit smoking if only he would ask the Lord for help. She didn't like it when her heart throb asked why she didn't ask for divine guidance for her weight problem.

If I had to carry a five pound weight in each hand while running, I would be pooped before reaching the finish line. Yet I was surprised at what I saw on my first public run of the season. A really overweight male was able to increase his running speed over his last year's record. He couldn't see his feet when he was running, and still was able to turn a corner without swaying. I believe fat is overloading his system, and will in time endanger his body's working parts. However one can easily tell by

following closely behind a trim pair of shorts that fat is beginning to disappear among the runners.

For 10 springs now, it's the 'in thing' to be sold on Bloomsday, whether you're a runner or a spectator. A 90 plus year old guy made it around this famous route; of course, he didn't create much dust, but it made him feel good. He now has a 10th anniversary souvenir T-shirt to show all his friends before rigor mortis sets in.

Out here in the heart of America's wheatland, it was the Almira Great Run that spiked a lot of runners spirits up to a higher level of happiness. It prepared us for that Bloomsday stampede. Visibly it looked like the whole show at Almira was run and operated by the women, except for the usage of a male trigger finger to blast off the starting gun.

The ladies' heaviest chore was the preparation and serving of a staggering size picnic dinner, that was easily devoured by 800 runners and guests.

There were local celebrities at Almira getting in their final practice for Bloomsday. Lenn Dompier, a 60 year old Davenport runner, made it around Almira's 6.2 mile course in 42 minutes. This workout helped Lenn to capture first place at Bloomsday for his division.

For those that have feet good enough for running, there are always plenty of runs left in Lincoln County before the snow flies. Wild Goose Chase at Wilbur is a bust. A group of about 700 runners is small enough to feel comfortable with, and large enough to represent a mini Bloomsday without that claustrophobic feeling. The Butte or Bust run at Creston is always a challenge. It's a climb if repeated weekly that could be a good workout for those with a weight problem.

Are there any middle aged farmers interested in running? Yes, Gil Sheffels of Wilbur is. The spring of '84, in the middle of his spray operation, he checked his wrist watch to see if he had time to make it up to the Keller run. By not having to wait for the ferry very long, Gil made it in time to slip into his shorts, and then wiggle himself into shape before the starting gun went off.

After completing the 6.2 mile run, Mr. Sheffels again checked his watch. He found he had time to make it back to the farm to replace the depleting water supply for his operating spray rig.

That run up on the reservation made Gil feel alert for the rest of the day. It also gave him peace of mind that his long slim body had had a good workout.

Running has now become a way of life for some of us. New converts are joining the pack every week. There are a few out there taking short cuts by putting their legs to work before breaking the smoking habit.

At least they are running. More power to them. There is a good chance they will be encouraged to clean out their lungs later on. Case in point:

During memorial weekend, I drove down to Coulee City to take part in initiating their first annual Rodeo Run. I was introduced to Pat Tigges, an active mother of full grown kids. She was at that time the editor and publisher of the Coulee City newspaper.

I found out that while Pat was training for this event, her husband realized that she wanted to prove that smokers can run, but he had doubts. A protective feeling came over Patty's husband, and he told her, "No, no, you mustn't do that, you won't make it."

Running with those negative thoughts must have put

some stress on Pat's body, especially as the run route stretched its way beyond this frontier looking town. Her husband, the Coulee City crop duster, jumped into his plane, and steered it into the air to see if Pat was making it around the run OK.

Upon finding out that she made it, and at a respectable time, he had a way of pouring some oil on the plane's exhaust system, so it could give off a smoke victory signal, that meant, "OK, baby, you made it, congratulations!"

That meant more to Pat than if she had won the overall winner's trophy. Not wanting to cover up her training habits, she readily confessed that between workouts, a few cigarettes, and a little beer found her lips.

Who knows, Pat could feel so good about her running success that she may want to find out if a pair of smokeless lungs would give her more working power. After the run, Pat shared a can of beer with us. It was against all my health rules in so doing. But it was like Eve tempting Adam. It tasted so darn good after the sweaty run, that I may have to evaluate 'my died in the wool' health habits.

Sister Madonna Buder

Being neither a Catholic or a Protestant, I was on neutral ground when I ran (so to speak) into Spokane's running nun, Sister Madonna Buder. It was just by luck, because nowadays modern nuns are hard to pick out from a group of non-nuns.

This incident happened a month after a Bloomsday run, during a Sunday service at the Unitarian Church. My

eyes fell upon an attractive lady that didn't carry an ounce of extra weight but did carry a deep tan. Later a friend introduced me to Sister Buder who came to hear what Dr. Houff had to say about Islam religion. She flattered Houff by asking him if he was over there to study those Islams. (three-quarters of a billion people are consumed by that faith).

Madonna Buder should have been called the original 'flying nun.' She flew in from Boston with jet-lag and all, just in time to take part in that year's Bloomsday run. Madonna's time was 56 minutes and 29 seconds. She can run eight miles in an hour.

Trains daily, scooping up 50 to 60 miles a week. One year she ran 2,200 miles, competing in 19 shorter runs and five marathons. As far as it is known, Madonna is the first and only nun to run the Boston Marathon.

For Buder, running is a "spiritual thing." She gives her God all the credit for what she has accomplished in running. Regardless where Sister Buder gets her steam from, she is a remarkable person.

I have saved paper clippings that includes other achievements. Madonna has been a counselor at Good Shepherd, is now a certified Graphoanalyst, master of counseling, and master of education psychology. Now, wait a minute! Through her photographic skills she also presents multi-media ministries and inspirational dancing. It proves that some nuns can expand beyond 'nunship' status.

Madonna told me she is considering writing a book. Certainly her story should be put down in print. The title she had in mind is a very good one, but I'll be darned if I can recall it now.

Then bless her heart, after a long absence from these parts, Sister Madonna Buder, the running nun was at Almira trying out her running legs. (1986) She did her thing for Multiple Sclerosis by making the 10,000 meter



Sister Buder at the Indian Keller Run.

course in 52 minutes. Not bad for a gal in her 50s. Then, for relaxation Madonna bicycled back as far as Davenport.

Sister Buder's absentee story is one of determination. The reason she hasn't been seen lately is because she has been doing her darndest to participate in the Iron Man Tri-athlon in Hawaii. That event requires getting the arms and legs in working condition for lots of fast cycling, swimming and running.

During Sister's workouts, a bad bike spill sent her to the hospital so her injured body parts could heal up cor-

rectly. What happened the following year was a repeat of her first try, including another trip to the hospital.

Finally Buder packed her bags and flew over to New Zealand, where her bike riding workouts were accomplished without any trips to the hospital. She then got her long awaited dreams fulfilled when she successfully worked her way through Hawaii's Iron Man Tri-athlon, and established a good record for herself.

Sister Madonna Buder's courage and strong will adds a lot of material for the book she is trying to write between her workouts and religious commitments.

A Little Bit Of This And That

Several years ago, before Halloween, a bunch of us had the privilege to run in a Spokane run. It was billed as the "Great Hallowe'en Hill Run—Spokane's Toughest 10K".

It was worth the run just to see the costumes. Some came as cave men with shoes on. Even though the flames were missing, a 63 year old she-devil got plenty hot, as her skin tight suit was made of plastic. Sister Buder appeared as an angel in a long white robe. Her wings were lowered to give less air drag. It didn't take the angel very long, with her glued on halo, to start ascending up that mountain road.

A male fairy-impersonator of large size, kept weaving in and out of us runners, trying to make better time. Little Orphan Annie and her Daddy Warbucks were pretty good runners. But her dog Sandy took too much time out to stop at every water puddle for a tongue-licking drink. Daddy Warbucks' black suit also trapped too much heat. A loosened collar and discarded coat made it possible for the famous trio to finish in fair time.

The eye-catching costume was of a shapely young lady wearing bunny shorts. She had a large powder puff pinned to her fanny.

When galloping 64 year old lawyer Dellwo breaks through the starting line, you are lucky to come in second for that age group.

Nature's paint brush of color is beautiful beyond words. It's overwhelming! No matter whether it's seen through the eyes of a Creationist or an Evolutionist. Whatever, man's relationship with Nature is just as real on both sides.

For example: One Sunday afternoon, some of us had the privilege of seeing nature's colors at work, when it was being reproduced through the new modern stained glass windows at the Methodist Church in Davenport. Rainbow colors were projected vividly on the ceiling.

On the way home from the reception, the skies were busy painting their own unique color patterns in the west, favoring reds, pinks and purples.

Later, Sister Buder stopped in to see us. She, too, had witnessed the sunset out at Coulee City. In fact that spectacular sunset saved her from losing an expensive telephoto camera lens. She left it on a rock back at Summer Falls. Awed by nature's painted beauty in the western skies, Buder wanted to capture that inspirational

scene on film. Finding her lens missing, a hasty retreat back to Summer Falls was in order. Luckily, the lens was there waiting to roll into the turbulent water.

In 1984, the Davenport Presbyterians finally made it to the century mark. They lost out to the Davenport Methodist group by only a few months. But that didn't stop the second place winners from putting on a series of big shows. Their kickoff celebration got started when some sky divers were sent down from the heavenly skies to land in front of a bunch of Presbyterians.

Then a couple of Sundays later, they presented sort of a nostalgia Sunday. The church revived its foundation ancestors by displaying some of their records, and old photos. Songs and music of by gone days came live from the young, and the not so young talented members.

As an outsider, it was a privilege to see a group holding together a heritage that is still serving their convinced faith well into the tail end of the 20th century.

The future of any solid religious organization really depends on how much it meets the modern problems of today. Years ago, the thinking was more or less centered around the concern of which faith had the safest road to the land beyond the sky.

Nearly 40 years ago, Rev. King, pastor of the Methodist church in Davenport, attended our Christmas program out at Rocklyn. Preacher King recognized talent (brag brag) and insisted that we come to town, and put on our nativity story.

When we moved ourselves and equipment into the Davenport Methodist, the Christ child had to be born once again at a later date. About a week after Christmas, our play filled the church. That year Rocklyn had the honor of lengthening out the Christmas season, and made preacher J. Dean King very happy.

Old movies taken at the play brought back memories that the drama wasn't too bad. In fact, pretty good! The stage was not as loaded as a Cecil B. DeMille production, but the message was there for those of the Christian faith.

Since Christian religion hinges on the resurrection, it was once again a privilege and a tradition to witness their faith out at the Rocklyn church during their Easter program.

After church, a fresh air run took me by green hills that eventually led me to relatives where Easter dinner was partaken of.

Certainly it's the time of year to be tolerant to all religions. As usual, there was no discussion about this important day for Christians. Instead there was a feeling of understanding. What more have we to give to one another than love and understanding?

Here are a couple of quotes from guys that are dead now, but were full of smarts: "Some beliefs are like blinders, shutting off the power to choose one's own direction. Some beliefs are pliable, like the young sapling growing with the upward thrust of life." When Gandhi was asked what his religion was, he realized there was a bit of good in all religions, so he answered by saying, "I'm Moslem, Christian, Buddha, Jew and Hindu."

Russell Chase is long gone now. His passing causes the mind to think back. While Russell was chairman of the Lincoln County Democrats, he taught me how to act like a good Democrat. Even though I've strayed from the flock every once in a while.

No matter how deep a political argument sank, Russell with a twinkle in his eyes, and a smile on his face, would jack up the conversation with a few humorous and factual remarks. He could recognize a strong potential candidate, as well as having a way of selling the good side of a weak one.

One time when Tom Foley visited Davenport, a small group of us guys got to visiting with him. He told what a rough time Russell Chase had selling him as a rookie, running for Walt Horan's Washington D.C. job. When they got to Davenport, Chase thought of a bright idea. He let the voters know that Tom's mother was born in Davenport. The voters then started to recognize Tom Foley as an OK guy.

One cold morning in January about 20 years ago, Henry Jackson and his fairly new wife paid Davenport a



very informal visit. Russell Chase was in his political glory. Between Jackson and Chase, they made it a jolly and relaxing affair. It was a breakfast I'll long remember.

Horse That Came In First

Our present day running craze has been going on for a long, long time. It all started over three thousand years ago at Olympia, Greece, where a guy dressed in a mini skirt would tear out of the city with a lighted torch, and run all the way from Olympia to a town that was going to have lots of athletic fun. A large overhead pan filled with oily stuff was waiting to be set on fire by the runner's smoking punk.

This bowl of floating fuel was a ritual to signal strong men to take part in competitive running and other rough housing sports. Women during that put down era weren't allowed to run around the track or take part in any other contest. In fact, for a while females couldn't even witness the males performing their great feats of manhood strength, so says history.

But eons later at Bloomsday, more of the fair sex turned out to participate in all that huffing and puffing than their counter mates did.

How far back did all this running-walking idea enter the active minds around these parts? Golly, that's hard to say. It was so darn foreign twenty years ago that if you were running along the side of the highway, cars would stop and ask 'what's up' or they would offer you a lift.

Later motorists got used to runners and would pass you up, even if you were injured.

Around the turn of the century at the Lincoln-Adams County Pioneer Picnic grounds, a kind of an early day Olympics was held annually. Instead of Chariot races, plain ordinary horse racing of the fastest kind took place on a well designed race track. A scooped out path was laid out for the pounding feet of the sack racers and for the three legged runners. The horse race track was used by competitive runners every day during the fiesta. Aunt Minnie won several prizes that consisted of goodies instead of ribbons. A fat man's race was tried out but it proved to be too dangerous and rather embarrassing. Border line heavyweights didn't want to be classified.

Sometimes the early day walking and running came out of necessity. The first walkathon I ever witnessed took place between Peach and our watering trough. This unscheduled 18 mile, one man run-walk event happened during the summer of 1928. No watering stations or spectators lined the dusty roadside. A riderless horse lead the way the course was to be followed.

Bill Thornburg who used to work for my dad during harvest, had a small peach orchard near the little town of

Peach. He also owned a young female horse that was at the ripe age for some transportation. But Bill got fooled when he tried mounting this filly in his yard. She went around and around in circles, and finally broke away from Thornburg and headed down the road.

Bill figured his horse would be tame enough to sneak up on, but it didn't work. To keep from being annoyed, the filly ran up to Hawk Creek Falls where she could eat some grass in peace. Again when Bill got close enough to become a threat, the young mare ran up past the Falls, and stayed ahead of him for the next 18 miles. The filly's escapade ended when she got thirsty enough to walk into our yard for a cool drink right from the watering trough. Dad then hooked a halter chain to the bridle of this wandering horse and chained her to a post.

About five minutes later, Mr. Thornburg ended this man-beast walkathon by appearing in front of our well, where he soused himself with water, both inside and out. Bill was hoping the horse would wander into someone's yard before getting to our place.

Determined to get home so he could cool off in peace, Bill was able to mount the horse with the aid of dad. Thornburg and the filly left the yard fast like, and rather on the rough side. We figured both would get home in no time, and all would be forgiven by Bill. But

when the two got down to the creek just back of our place, the filly decided Bill was a load, so she tossed him off.

The two headed home, again independent of each other. Except when Bill crawled out from the creek bottom, he headed for bachelor George Sweetman's shack up on the prairie. That evening Mr. Sweetman filled Bill up with a lot of food, and he slept like a log the whole night through with bachelor Sweetman as a bed partner.

The next morning Bill hoped to catch a ride back to Peach, but nobody that went to Davenport ever completed the return trip in those days 'til afternoon. The quickie fresh air ride Bill got out of the filly the day before, shortened his walk back by a mile.

Upon entering the yard gate, the home grown mare was there to greet Bill and showed no sign of resenting his presence. She allowed him to take that darn saddle off of her.

In those days before cars took over completely, transportation sometimes turned out to be a balky problem. Those of you that are still alive, and knew Bill Thornburg will remember him as a tall, lean, muscular guy. If running was the 'in thing' then, like it is now, he would have given our best runners a run for their money.

Those Horse And Buggy Days

I'm still thinking about Bill Thornburg breaking in a horse so he could be transported in a more reliable way. During the animal powered transportation days, a certain amount of time had to be spent to get all the bugs ironed out. After break-in was accomplished, the live horse power part of these vehicles grew in value. Now days, a modern combustion motor vehicle depreciates as soon as the rig is driven away from the car dealer.

In the horse and buggy days not everyone living in town could own their own transit system. It was next to impossible for the average city family to have space enough to accommodate the necessary equipment. Each residential lot would have had to have room for a stack of hay, a manure pile, and a stable to hold the driving team, plus a proper shed to store the carriage in.

Of course if you were among the rich and the spoiled living in a large city, it was a different story. Spokane's early day classy people that had plenty of estate, built their stables to match their mansions in design. Driving teams had to come up with certain qualifications, including the color of the horse's hide and body build.

Take for instance, old man Glover, the father of Spokane. His oversized family house was, and still is a massive pile of stones, cement, and lots of heavy wood that was used to frame out large hollow like rooms. Bigness really takes away that homey feeling. The bulky combination barn and stables are all gone now, but the horse and coach path still circles the mansion's portico and loading dock. A reminder of the days of splendor and of coachmen. The mansion is now being used as a church educational unit, and is on the state historical register.

Getting back to the common people, courtship during horse and buggy days was a problem. Especially for those young fellows that weren't born with a silver spoon in their mouths. Some young men just used the family rig which limited their dating. In dire need for independence, they would rent a horse and buggy from the livery stable. Now days with easy car payments, it is possible for the young blade to go tooling down Riverside Avenue on Saturday nights.

How far did some of the young men go to achieve a rig of their own so they could take the fair sex out for a buggy ride? Well, Pat Sullivan, a young guy who used to own the quarter I live on, figured for the want of a buggy, it was worth mortgaging his farm. So on July 2, 1904, the Spaulding Buggy Manufacturing Company's sales office in Harrington took a Mortgage on this 160 acres for \$120, the full price of their fanciest buggy with the fringe on top. Two days later on July 4th, Pat was then able to take his girlfriend for a buggy ride to Davenport, and a sight seeing drive through the main street of the town.

On Sept. 14, 1904, Pat gathered in enough dough from his harvested wheat crop to pay the mortgage off on his farm. It's interesting when you know the story, and check through the Abstract of Title for records of this man's wild spending spree.

That fall Pat Sullivan started doing a lot of courting in his mortgage free buggy. However, years later he died down at Miles without finding any lasting female companions.

Some young bucks could not afford a horse, let alone a buggy. Roy Horton who used to work for dad, got a job over at the George Sweezy farm. One Sunday

morning while the Sweezy family was at church, Roy got lonesome and walked to Davenport. He had previously met a girl in town who he figured didn't mind going for a buggy ride with him. So he rented a horse and buggy from the livery stable for the afternoon.

That evening after checking in his rent-a-buggy and horse, Roy faced quite a walk back to the Sweezy farm. In those days it wasn't too romantic looking at the rear end of a horse when you parked with your date, but it was a good substitute until cars came along.

A Transcontinental Run-Walk

All you retired farmers and those that have been put out to pasture—are you really satisfied with the daily humdrum of retirement? Do you realize you may not be ready to settle for that daily trip to the Post Office or an afternoon of shopping for the right kind of food that your aging stomach needs? There may be more restlessness left in some of us than we realize.

Take for instance old man LeGrande Daby, a retired farmer from Minnesota. He had it in his head nearly 40 years ago to run-walk from the Atlantic to the Pacific. But he couldn't find the time because he and his wife, Ina, had five boys and a girl to raise up to marriageable age.

Finally when life was pushing LeGrande to the great-grandfather stage of life, he and Ina went to Arizona to find the heavenly bliss of retirement. But shopping for food, playing croquet, and running in local runs wasn't exciting enough for LeGrande. Thoughts of fulfilling his dream of running and walking across the United States entered his active but aging mind.

So about a year before his fete, LeGrande sprung his planned self-propelled running tour across the continent to Ina. At first Ina resisted with all the 72 year old might she could muster. She got the five sons, also the daughter, and their families to concur with her, all telling galloping grandpa it would be dangerous, and was, to put it most kindly, too far out to be reasonable.

Finally Ina was worn down to grudgingly agreeing to take part in this escapade. If she had not given in LeGrande told her he would still do his thing the following year, alone, and with a back pack. She didn't dare risk that.

So, four years ago this spring, LeGrande and Ina hooked their 5th wheeler to the pick-up and drove away from their retirement home in Prescott, Arizona, and headed to Eastport, Maine.

Day one began when LeGrande stuck his finger in the Atlantic Ocean, shook hands with the town mayor, and was escorted to the edge of town by a police car. From there on it was LeGrande's duty to pick up his feet and lay 'em down fast like, 'til he got to the Pacific Ocean.

Of course, it was Ina that made the whole 'thing' possible. She had to maneuver the combination sleeping quarters and cook house through towns and find roadside space every four or five miles so husband would have rest stops.

Each morning for the next four months, LeGrande would wake up, stretch, and shave. Then he would put on his running shoes and some well ventilated necessities and head down the road for a few miles to where Ina figured he needed his breakfast. Ina would make her trailer stops whenever she thought he needed to tank up on food and water. From time to time reporters and news

cameramen would catch up with the Dabys for interviews and pictures. Still LeGrande was able to make from 25 to 34 miles a day, all across those many states.

On June 28, near East Grand Fork, Minnesota, the half way point to the Pacific Ocean was reached. That day found Ina and the Winnebago in front of their old Minnesota farm, with grandpa hopping along not too far behind. LeGrande gauged his speed so as to get to the old farmstead for one of their son's 25th wedding anniversary, and their own Golden Anniversary. (July 4th was in between their two actual anniversary dates.)

What a day, Sunday, July 4th turned out to be for the Dabys! I believe it would have made a wonderful T.V. special if word would have gotten out ahead of time. With loads of friends and relatives from miles around coming there to celebrate that novel occasion. Those few days of celebrating gave grandpa LeGrande's feet a chance to get some rest.

The last half of LeGrande's run-walk was most enjoyable for Ina. She picked wild flowers along the roadside and pressed them while her husband was tearing across the Northwestern States. "Montana has come through, after all, with pretty flowers!" she states.

When they made it to west of Reardan, Wash. Ina wrote in her daily diary: "Dad was stopped by a couple from California, and by a woman grain hauler. Both had



LeGrande and wife Ina, posing near the Racklyn road.

recognized him from stories on T.V. and wanted to meet him . . . I couldn't resist taking slide pictures of all these acres and acres of rolling, yellow grain fields. They are being harvested now. They are unbelievably immense, just roll on and on, on both sides of the road, as far as the eye can see.

"After we parked for the night on a field approach, we were visited by a pleasant young woman, Mrs. Ziemer, and later by an older man, a runner, Walt Kik, whom she called and stayed a long time. He and LeGrande babbled on and on about running.

"The next day, his wife, Sugar, stopped us to take pictures. The country is getting rougher, there are still huge grain fields . . . It's very hot. LeGrande can stand the heat better than I can. I was entirely exhausted by quitting time.

"August 20. It's plenty hot on the road today. A woman reporter from the Wilbur, Wash. paper visited with us at noon for an interview. Right after that, we had to detour from Almira to Hartline, making extra miles to go in all that heat. Up and down hills all the time on the detour. We got to Hartline by 5:00 p.m. and found a nice little city park . . . We had a good night sleep, no traffic

roaring by for a change.

'Another hot day!!! First thing this morning, a young woman stopped to get LeGrande's autograph. Then a bicyclist stopped to talk to me and this time took MY picture, 'cause LeGrande wasn't in sight...We finally reached Coulee City...What surprises me about this country is that, 'tho it certainly looks like rocky, desert land, it still has grain fields on the TOPS of the big rolling hills."

The Dabys got cooled off by the time they got to the Cascades. In a few days LeGrande was able to stick his finger in the Pacific Ocean, thus ending a 40 year old dream of using his body for a 3,400 mile workout.

June 13, 1986, LeGrande and Ina stopped in for an overnight stay. They are backtracking his coast to coast run-walk, to see what it is like doing it by sitting side by side with each other.

Visiting with LeGrande charged me up enough to dream of doing a mini run-walk. I'd get to see Sugar every four or five miles. She would have peanut butter, bread and fruit all laid out on the pick-up tail gate for me. But I don't know. After all, LeGrande is younger than I am. He is only 75 years old.

Bare Buns Fun Run - 1986

What did I do July 27 on my birthday? Well, I ran in the Bare Buns Fun Run. After all, I came into this world naked 77 years ago, and it was neat to have a chance to celebrate in my same birthday suit. The Pueblo Indians of early days couldn't have been any closer to nature than a group of about 300 were that Sunday. I had the urge to run without any body coverage, for as long as old man Daby had for wanting to run across the U.S.

There were lots of runners Sunday in the high caliber bracket of society that I knew. So before condemning anyone for enjoying a carefree run, remember it might be your next door neighbor who ran, minus the fig leaf. Many of you local runners would know several that didn't mind streamlining their bodies down to zero.

How did all this 'Garden of Eden' stuff get started? Sign up forms were available at the Y.W.C.A. The Kaniksu Ranch that is affiliated with the Northwest Sunbathers Association sponsored the run. A briefing was held at the Y.W.C.A. for those that hadn't run before in this unique race. Also membership is open to all those who demonstrated by their conduct that their attitudes are compatible with the purpose and goals of the organization.

Thinking I'd be the oldest fossil down at this nature's paradise, I got fooled. At the entrance an 80 year old guy by the name of Matt Roberts is this nudist colony's official greeter and sign up fellow. His white hair and all over tan body truly made him a picture of health.

This nudist camp made as much out of their race as if it was the Bloomsday run. The night before this momentous event, they filled us up on carbo-loaded food. (Spaghetti, salad and bread.)

What seemed strange to me, was when morning came, you just got up and got going. There is no value in

having shades in campers, except for special personal occasions.

What was it like to run 'bare butt style'? It's no big deal. For those that are critical of such goings-on, it's their hang-up, not mine. True Bare bun living is not for everyone. The only 'shock' will be your surprise at how easy it is to go nude, and how thoroughly enjoyable it can turn out to be.

To make better time as a streaker, everyone wore shoes. However, wearing jogging shoes sort of spoiled that Adam and Eve look. A couple of ladies were wearing halters due to their heavy breasts getting out of rhythm with their jogging stride.

The course went down a winding stretch that had scenic wonders on both sides of the road. The view I had in front throughout the run, reminded me of artist Reubens' paintings of nudes scampering down the road to somewhere.

Runners were wishing me a happy birthday throughout the run. They had my age made up on the running tag that hung from my neck. How sweet. While picking up my award, it was a novelty to hear 300 nudies singing happy birthday to me.

Nudists proved to be a very friendly bunch. They all seemed interested about the good life, and who you are, which made us visitors feel quite at home. The conversation never settled on how much clothes cost, or where you got them.

Recreational sports including swimming are as much a part of nudist life as sunbathing itself. The association maintains a legal fund to fight any harassment by local authorities when members are on chartered grounds.

It was a pleasure to visit and experience something different. They all have their own unique personalities, including the youngsters who also know when and where stripping is OK.

Sugar didn't want to get her buns sunburned, so she didn't go with me. She went to the Rocklyn picnic instead. I made it back late Sunday to Mielke's picnic grounds, where the accepted way of life greeted my eyes with sights of shorts, slacks and farmers in overalls. I gave

Sugar a big hug, and thanked her for her special birthday present of encouraging me to do my own thing. Happy birthday was sung by a smaller group this time that had clothes on.

Later I grabbed a ride on one of the Mielke sponsored hayrides. Wearing shorts did protect my buns while sitting on those sticky haybales. It made viewing the evening scenery from the wagon more comfortable.

Curious Questions

A number of interesting questions arose from the minds of the inquisitive about the sunbathers' run. It was advertised in a northwest runners' guide where this 5K was to take place. The Y.W.C.A. was kind enough to let this skin exposure bunch hold a couple of screening sessions at their establishment. The Kaniksu Ranch is the only Sunbathing Association that has ever sponsored a run, nudist style. Next year they intend to add to their scampering a 10 K run.

For you that think nudism is the creation of the present overstepping generation, you are fooled. It had its beginning in Germany around 1920. A German immigrant named Kurt Barthel and his wife brought nudism to America in 1929. Since then 180 nudist organizations have been formed throughout North America. They were first called the 'American League for Physical Culture' which eventually became the American Sunbathers Association. Kaniksu Ranch will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year. A charter member couple was on the grounds, taking in the Bare Buns Run. This couple hopes to witness many more summer events in their birthday suits.

Now to answer some deep thinking questions that I've been asked. No, I don't plan on joining the nudist association. There is no scientific evidence that exposure of my buns will lengthen my life any. However, since I've been darn near a nudist all my life, I felt very much at home fellowshiping with this special bunch of people. If we lived closer to Kaniksu Ranch I probably would join, in support of their freedom from social hang-ups.

Yes, you are right. Dining out at this nudist colony is not a coat and tie affair. When eating in their dining room, you are as naked as your sandals allow you to be. A sign over the kitchen area was one I could appreciate about 10 years ago. It read: 'No shoes, No shirt, Service with a smile.' For the ladies, Kaniksu Ranch is no place to try out your new bikini. At the swimming pool they have a sign posted, "No swim suits allowed."

Nudists are not entirely against wearing clothes during the summer months. Have you ever tried to fry bacon in the nude? When I went to pick up my breakfast, the cook's body was draped with a mother Hubbard type of apron.

No, a nudie smoker doesn't tie a cigarette package around their neck. There were a few naked cigarette smokers, and they didn't stray very far from their fix.

To me, today's nudist could simply be described as someone who enjoys camping, swimming, exercising, and socializing without the need to remain clothed. The

body is beautiful, and comes in various shapes and sizes. It's the physical house we live in.

Aren't you afraid of getting skin cancer the way you run around? No, but I'll see a doctor if something looks funny on my skin. We now have that safety feature that ancient humans didn't have. Ever since my teenage days I wore a constant tan, and that prevented seasonal sunburns, which seems to be the real problem. For you spring whites, why not smear your whole skin surface with a suntanning lotion 'til the sun and you become partners? Good gosh! for millions of years every living thing depended on the sun for life. We humans evolved to where nature gave us a tan. If I'm not outside when the sun is out, I don't feel happy. Even the lights in our house have to match the power of a bright day.

So far nobody took time to ask me what the crops were like on my farm this year. Well I'm going to tell you anyway. The yield fell into the one digit figure, less than 10 bushel per acre. Renter Gene Stuckle had some fields on my cousin's farm that did make 30 bushels.

I didn't even ride the combine this harvest. The crops looked bad enough from the ground, let alone seeing it from the top of a self-propel. The last few years this same land averaged 50 bushels an acre.

Stuckle nearly busted his buns (a word commonly used nowadays) trying to get a crop on the road to produce lots of wheat. A dose of heavy fertilizer was applied. Early seeding was done. When cheat grass threatened to take over a good stand of wheat, Gene reseeded, but there was no growing time left, because winter came in November. When spring arrived, Gene risked his neck by flying on lots of anti-weed stuff. Stuckle's reward? Not enough wheat could be squeezed out of the crop to pay for his farm expense.

Some of us retired farmers sort of felt smug that we had a small wad saved up for retirement years. But that's not much satisfaction when you see younger farmers with good intentions that may go down the drain, if extended help is not given.

Grand Coulee's Over The Dam Run

The month of August brings an end to summer. The cheerful sounds of youngsters as they splash the water's edge of our many lakes ends also. The smell of fall takes over. Fairs throughout the state begin showing off their wares, which include runs, parades, and lots and lots of visiting.

When harvest days are over, time will tell who will be the happy farmers. All it takes to reach that goal is for the price of wheat to go skyward, a crop that you couldn't walk through without cutting a path, and a wife who thinks you are the greatest.

On August 16, 1986, a couple of young farmers left their air conditioned combines to work out their stress by taking part in a hot afternoon run down at the Dam. Grand Coulee's Over the Dam Run is sort of the interstate affair of the summer season, and has been going at it for 10 years now. The Dam is a good drawing card for the out of staters who usually plan their vacations, so as to take in the run. Regulars from Canada, Alaska, California, and all points locally have been chasing themselves over the Dam course for many a hot summer.

The massiveness of the Dam makes the run a geological wonder. Solid ledges of towering granite rock are going to hold that Dam in for a long time to come. The control guys at the Dam pulled some levers that made a large waterfall cascade over the dam all during the run. When the last runner hobbled in, the Dam's water valves were screwed down tight. What a treat it was for the eyes

and body! I swear it cooled down the temperature in the last mile of the run.

Of course our Dorris Cronrath of Odessa was the top female streamliner, averaging a mile every six and a half minutes. The Dam Run is especially noted for its oldies. Every year, many a good runner that hasn't burned out before reaching 65 is being added to the list.

After the run, the Dam Park (no offense) is a dandy place to visit with annual friends. I was introduced to a farmer that's been hacking away trying to make a living, but figures he will be wiped out this fall. He takes part in harvest runs and realizes he can't run away from his problems. Yet, it helps temporarily. Jokingly he also added, "Running is the only sport I can afford now. It will keep me well supplied with T-shirts when I go out looking for a job."

A lot of farmers are not sitting on such shaky ground, but that's not of any help to the soil tillers that are in trouble. The ones that started up with a bang when high inflation was going full blast, spiked themselves up to go wide open. Their mistakes were taken care of by inflation. But when something happened to inflation, and that worthless price for wheat set in, it simply raised heck with the non-fortified farmer.

We retired farmers had our day of suffering, but from a different angle. I don't believe we were tempted so much to over buy, or to over speculate. Still, a lot of us older guys had to live through a lot of high and low points to preserve the family farm.

Sounds Of Nature

I guess I'm a little like what Henry Thoreau said about himself, "I have a real genius for staying at home." That's not to say one shouldn't at rare times wander away a 1,000 miles or so and find out what it's like to be away from an established environment.

In Thoreau's time, there were no steam or nuclear plants to bug his environment. Fortunately, there is still enough aroma, sights and sounds of nature left to remind us of past events. Last spring while on a walk, Sugar found a strong smelling flower and held it in front of my nose. The aroma woke up some sleeping memory cells. My mind went back to when as a first grader, I walked home from school across the pasture. While bluebirds were fluttering from one sagebrush to another, I remember pulling up that same small weed-like flower for sniffing.

Going for walks is really neat. Like Thoreau said, "He who rides and keeps the beaten track, studies the fences chiefly." Running also takes away some of the scenery, as one is too busy receiving the health benefits of circulating gobs of air through the lungs. On long walks, did you ever sit down to rest and find a whole garden of things before your very eyes?

Some friends of ours, when gas was cheap, took a two week trip through 17 states. When asked why they were camping down at the lake after such a long trip,

they said, "Oh, we're spending the rest of our vacation time down here resting up." They didn't see a damm thing except the road, two car wrecks and signs showing places to park for the night.

How about staying off the rambling freeways as much as possible? We cannot tune in successfully to the sounds of nature and noise at the same time. On one of our walks down to the creek, Sugar made it be known she'd just as soon I would stop talking to listen to the stillness, which has a sound of it's own. That treat lasted 'til some low-flying practice bombers zoomed over our heads.

It's to everyone's taste, but a lot of old time settlers settled in cracks between two hills. They shortened their sights of scenery a whole lot. Those pioneers must have been thinking of easy access to water, and nothing else. It's like living in trenches.

My dream before reaching the end of life's rope is to drag an old shack with a lot of cracks in it to a high spot. There is no greater tranquility for an insomniac than to hear nature stirring around outside a not too protected shack.

The thought of having a Henry Thoreau type of cabin came to me before Sugar entered my life. During the summer months, my bedroom partner was a combine next to my cot, in an open machine shed. The shed was

located by a wheat field. On sultry nights, sudden wind storms would rattle the standing wheat, and the dampness gave off a fresh vegetation aroma. A few raindrops

would find their way through the cracks, causing a restful, contented feeling to pass over me. It gave me reason to believe that we could have a fair crop after all.

Some Heavy Stuff

Powerful Statements

Old age is an incurable disease.

Anger is a brief madness, but it can do damage that lasts forever.

When the judgment is weak the prejudice is strong.

Opinions grounded on prejudice are always sustained with the greatest violence.

Bad meals kill more than the best doctors ever cured.

Exercise, Good Cheer and Moderate Diet are the three best doctors.

The future joy makes the past and the present bearable.

There's no joy in anything unless we share it.

We come to Being quite by chance,
And life is but a fleeting glance —
Just one glimpse, and then 'tis o'er,
And Time rolls on just as before.

Sugar Kik

I call that mind free which jealously
guards its intellectual rights and powers,
Which does not content itself with a
passive or hereditary faith.

I call that mind free which resists
the bondage of habit,
Which does not mechanically copy the
past, nor live on its old virtues:

But which listens for new and higher
monitions of conscience,
And rejoices to pour itself forth in
fresh and higher exertions.

I call that mind free which sets no bounds to its love . . .

Bill Channing

Memories are jewels set in place

Like paths of yesterday retraced.

Buried in hearts, seasoned with time.

Freshened by moments of the mind.

The pages turn, one by one,

as Time runs out before we've begun;

but another hand takes up the pen,

fills his page, and then

passes it on to another and yet another.

Authors unknown

Dear Walt:

Your Davenport Times articles have made me smile and have reminded me that I, too, am creating history. I've been touched by the grown from knowing you through your writings. Thanks for sharing yourself via newsprint. I will miss you - your breezy philosophy, gusty humor and hurricane energy. Write your book, vacation with your wife, then come back to your Davenport Times readers.

Sincerely,

Lynne Carstens

Reardan, Washington (Sept. 1986)

Resurrection Day

(An understanding request)

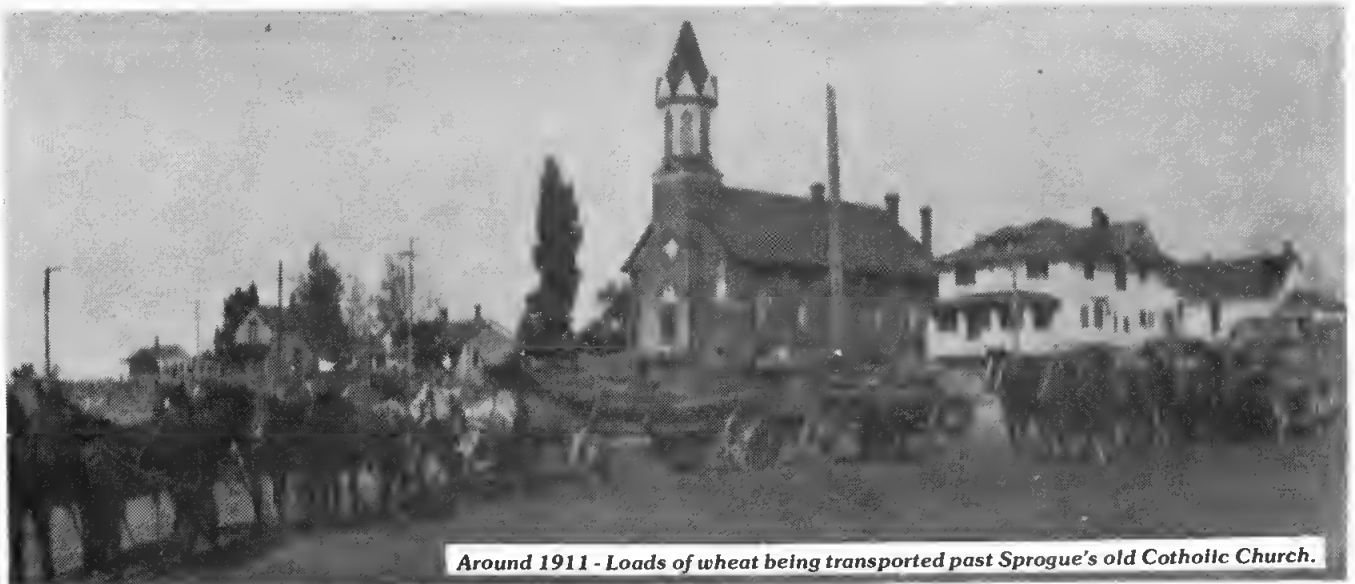
By Groce Gibson, Wilbur, Wosh.

That glorified new body you can leave on the rack!
It's the old one I cherished that I'm wanting back.

The rusted out old one with all of the scars
Was far more precious for all of the mars.

That shining brand new one would startle my eyes,
While his old used one was my special prize.

When I limp into Heaven please God, let me see
My beloved old husband just like he used to be.



Around 1911 - Loads of wheat being transported past Sprogue's old Catholic Church.

